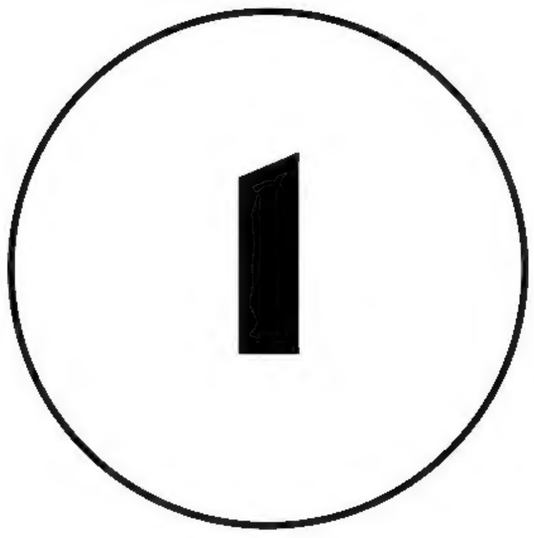
SUZUKA



Kouji Seo

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BALLANTINE BOOKS • NEW YORK

A Note from the Author

This story is set in the town where I spent eight years of my life aspiring to be a manga artist. I used to go to the Inari Shrine and pray that I'd "become a manga artist someday." It's amazing that my wish actually came true. I'll never forget the taste of the meat and potato croquettes that I used to eat back then.

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SUZUKA

KOUJI SEO

SUZUKA

1

Kouji Seo

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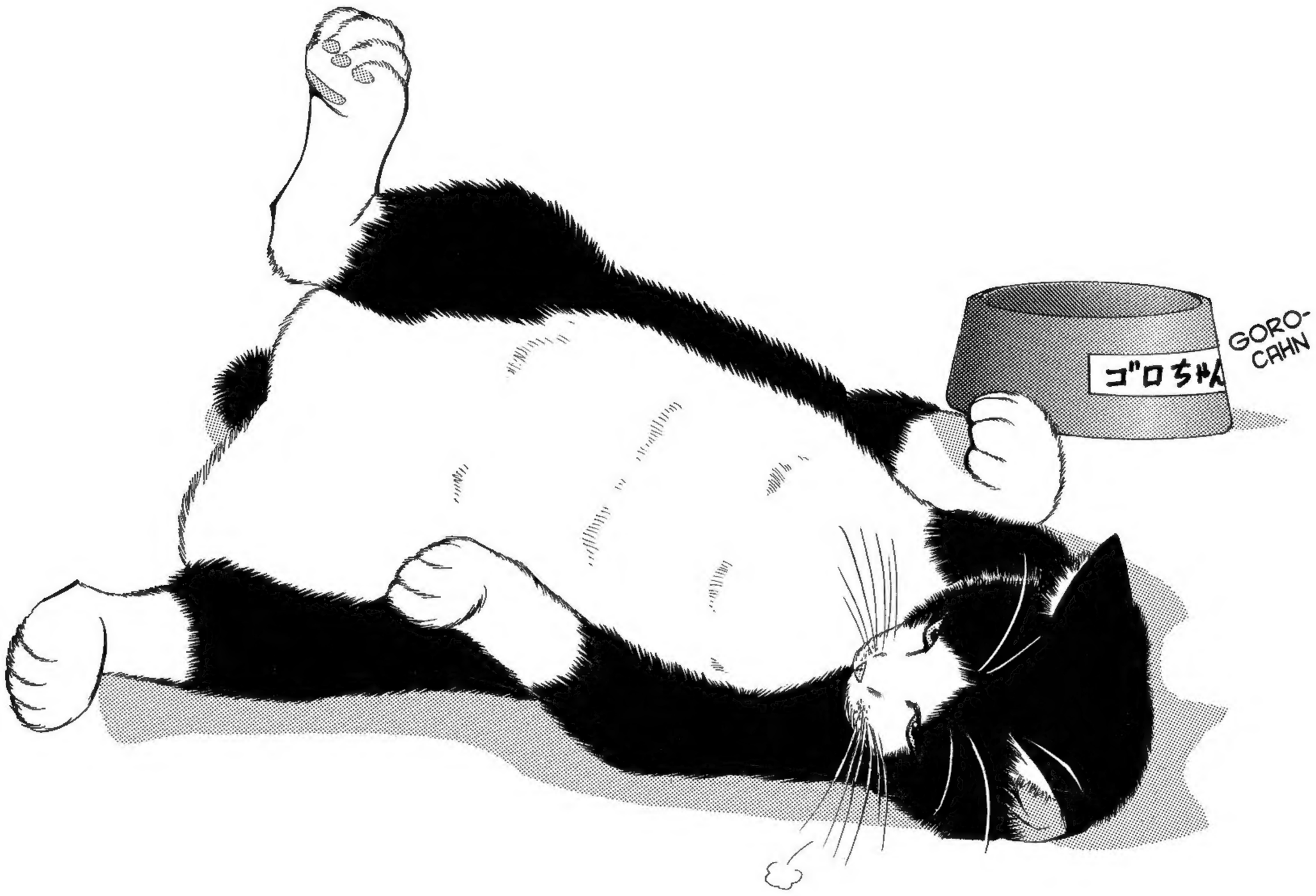


I MADE THE SEVEN-HOUR JOURNEY FROM THE HIROSHIMA COUNTRY-SIDE ALL THE WAY TO TOKYO.

ザー

CLOP

IT WAS A RAINY DAY IN TOKYO, JUST A WEEK BEFORE HIGH SCHOOL STARTED...

CLOP

CLOP

...

...WHEN I HAPPENED TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF HER...

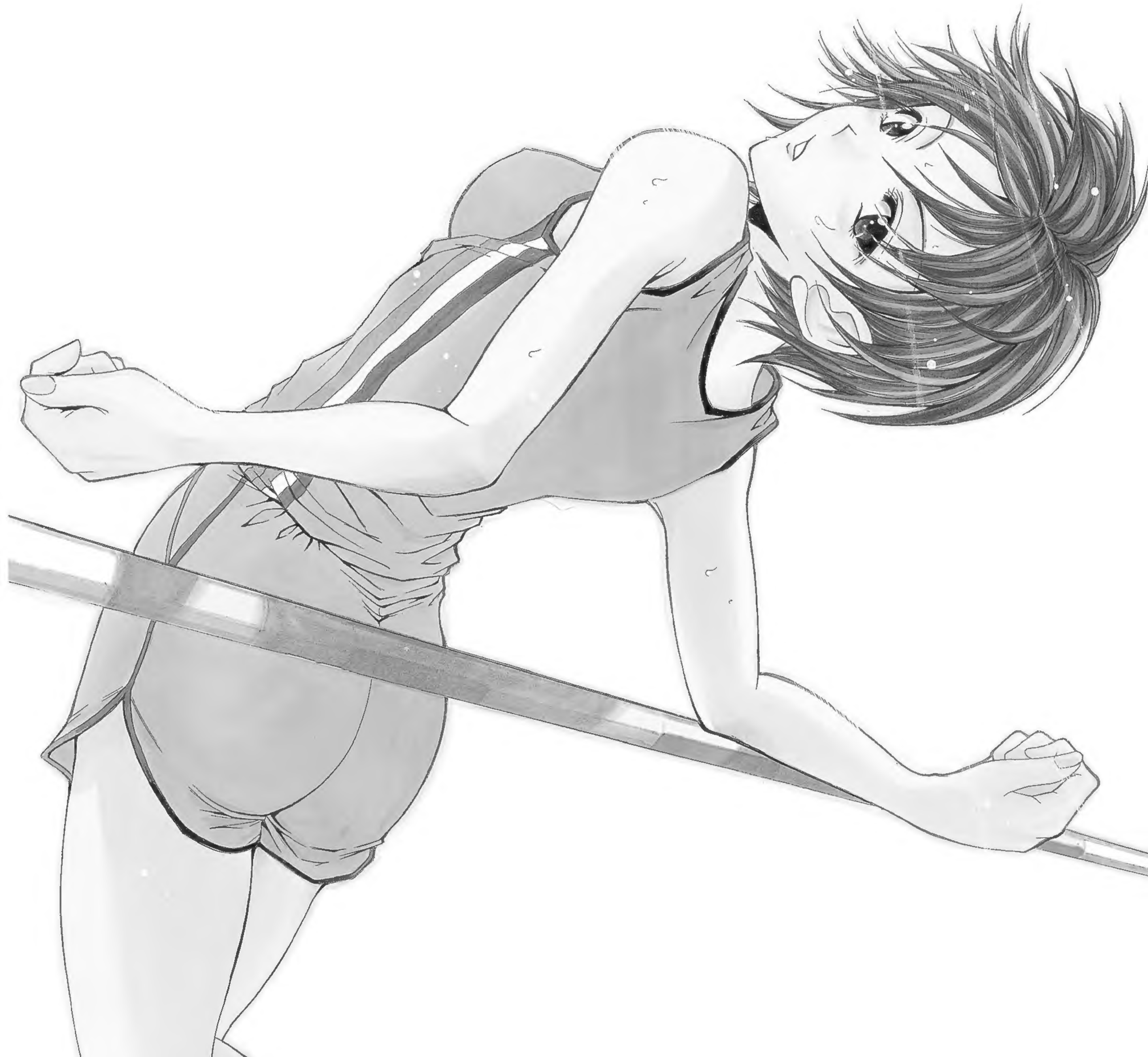
FWISH

SHE LOOKED SO COOL...

...AND I DON'T THINK I'D EVER SEEN...

Suzuka

...SUCH A CUTE GIRL.



#0 Suzuka

...SURE IS LATE.

YAMATO-KUN...

TSSSS

YOU'RE GONNA CATCH COLD. WHY DON'T YOU WAIT INSIDE, MIHO!

BUT HE SAID HE WOULD BE HERE AT TWO.

HE PROBABLY GOT SIDE-TRACKED ALONG THE WAY.

THAT WOULD BE JUST LIKE HIM, WOULDN'T IT, GORO-CHAN?

MEOWW

MAYBE AUNTIE DECIDED NOT TO LET HIM GO TO SCHOOL IN TOKYO.

DON'T WORRY. MY SISTER SAID SHE'D LET HIM COME AS LONG AS HE STAYS WITH US.

TSSSSS

STEP

YAMATO AKITSUKI HAS ARRIVED!!

SCHWIP

SORRY I'M LATE!

HUH?

GRIN

I THINK YOU'VE ANGERED, PRINCESS MIHO.

YOU'RE AWFULLY LATE, YAMATO-KUN.

YOU'RE LATE, YAMATO-KUN!

WHOA!

FWAAP

YOU'VE GOTTEN SO BIG. YOU'RE ABOUT TO START JUNIOR HIGH NOW, RIGHT?

MIHO-CHAN!

WHOA! HOW'D YOU KNOW?

I BET YOU GOT SIDE-TRACKED ALONG THE WAY, DIDN'T YOU?

HA, HA. I KNEW THAT!

TCH, *NO!* I'M ALREADY STARTING MY SECOND YEAR! DUH! GEEZ, YOU'RE SO CLUELESS.

I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU, YAMATO-KUN.

IT'S SO OBVIOUS.

STOP BEING SO FORMAL.

BOW

WELL, AUNTIE AYANO, STARTING TODAY I SHALL BE AT YOUR SERVICE.

YEAH, I GUESS YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE KNOW-IT-ALL, MIHO.

TEE HEE

ニヌネス

HEE

STOP IT, MOM!

HURRY UP, YAMA-TO-KUN!

I'LL SHOW YOU TO YOUR ROOM.

OKAY!

ASAHIYU BATHS

WELL, YOU'RE MY LAND-LORD NOW.

DON'T THINK OF IT THAT WAY, WE ARE RELA-TIVES AFTER ALL.

OH, YOUR SUIT-CASES ARE ALREADY UP IN YOUR ROOM.

. . . ?

SO, THIS IS MY NEW HOME...

WHAT THE HECK IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN? I CAN BE MANLY WHEN I NEED TO BE, AYANO-SAN.

EMPLOYEES ONLY

OH, AND I ALREADY TOLD EVERY-BODY ABOUT YOU.

STEP

STEP

...WELL... IT'S NOT AS IF YOU'RE A STRANGER... BESIDES, IT'LL BE GOOD TO HAVE A MAN AROUND HERE...EVEN A MAN LIKE YOU, YAMATO-KUN.

WE USUALLY DON'T ALLOW MEN HERE, BUT...

I'LL TAKE CARE OF CLEANING THE BATHS AND WHATEVER ELSE YOU NEED ME TO DO. *NO* PROBLEM.

NOT ONLY AM I NOT PAYING RENT, YOU'RE EVEN PAYING ME TO WORK HERE.

HUH? UH, I WAS CHECKING OUT THE SCHOOL. IT WAS ON THE WAY, SO I FIG-URED...

HEY, HEY, YAMATO! WHAT WERE YOU REALLY DOING ON YOUR WAY HERE!

WELL, CLEANING BATHS IS PRETTY TOUGH WORK, YOU KNOW. I HOPE YOU'RE NOT ALL TALK.

DON'T WORRY. I CAN HANDLE IT.

UH... WELL...I GUESS IT'S ABOUT TIME TO START CLEANING THE BATHS.

THAT'S ODD... WHY SO DEFEN-SIVE, YAMATO-KUN?

WHA-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THAT'S RIDIC-ULOUS.

GIGGLE

REALLY? ARE YOU SURE YOU WEREN'T OUT TRYING TO PICK UP GIRLS?

MAYBE I DID UNDER-ESTIMATE THIS PLACE.

...

SCHWUP

SCHWUP

FWAHHH

THIS REALLY IS HARD WORK.

YOUNG GIRLS...

IT'S ACTUALLY PRETTY MODERN.

I BET THERE'RE EVEN SOME YOUNG GIRLS WHO COME HERE.

WOW, THEY HAVE A SAUNA AND EVEN A JACUZZI.

MAYBE SHE'LL STOP BY THE SPA ON HER WAY HOME FROM PRACTICE...

THAT GIRL GOES TO THE SAME SCHOOL AS ME...

YOU'D BETTER LIVE UP TO YOUR WORD.

I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU COULD "HANDLE IT."

WHAT? YOU HAVEN'T EVEN FILLED THE TUBS YET?

!?

SHOCK

WELL, YOU'D BETTER HURRY, IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR—

SQUEAK

SH... SHUT UP!

THIS IS NOTHING! I'LL BE FINISHED IN NO TIME!

THERE'RE TWO COLLEGE GIRLS LIVING IN OUR COMPLEX.

OH YEAH, I ALMOST FOR-GOT.

WHY? IS SHE DANGEROUS OR SOMETHING?

AH!!

SHWIP

WATCH OUT FOR THE ONE WITH LONG HAIR.

ESPECIALLY WHEN SHE'S AROUND COUNTRY BUMPKINS LIKE YOU...

SHE'S EXTREMELY DANGEROUS.

I-I CAN'T DO THAT. I'M NOT LIKE YOU, SAOTOME-SAN.

I MEAN, YOU'VE AT LEAST GOTTA MAKE USE OF THOSE HUGE BOOBS OF YOURS, YOU KNOW?

LIKE I SAID, MEGUMI, JUST GO OUT WITH GUYS AND LET THEM BUY YOU STUFF.

WHAT? THEY AREN'T?

HUH? THE TUBS AREN'T FULL YET?

AH!

HUH?

↑ NEARSIGHTED.

WAAHHH!

DON'T LOOK!

OUCH! YOUR NAILS!

STAY AWAY FROM HIM, YOU PER-VERT!

HMMMM. THAT'S NOT A BAD-LOOKING FACE HE'S GOT THERE.

AH! THAT MUST BE THE GUY THE LANDLADY WAS TALKING ABOUT. YAMATO-KUN, RIGHT?

HUH? IS SOME-BODY THERE?

MEN'S BATH

GET OUT OF HERE, YOU TWO.

HUH?

BOING

BOING

THAT'LL BE 50,000 YEN*, PLEASE.

♡

カリ

THPPT

*APPROXIMATELY $500

AAAHH!

HMMPH!

ドッ

THWACK

GET OUT OF HERE, YAMATO-KUN!

MY GLASSES MY GLASSES

60,000

70,000

80,000

THPPT

BOING

BOING

BOING

BOING

WA-WAHHHH!

HEY!

FWISH

S-STOP!

KYAA!

THUD

WAY TO GO, MEGU-MI-CHAN!

YAMATO-KUN!

OUCH!

I-I THIDN'T THEW IT ON PURPOTH.*

* I DIDN'T DO IT ON PURPOSE.

THUP

!

HUH...!?
IT-IT'S
HER!
THE GIRL FROM THE TRACK CLUB!

104

103

102

WHAT IS SHE DOING HERE?

UHM... IT- IT'S NOT WHAT YOU-

...IN YOUR OWN ROOM PLEASE?

WOULD YOU MIND DOING THAT...

THERE'S NO WAY OUR SECOND EN-COUNTER...

HEY!

N-NO, WAIT!

....COULD'VE BEEN ANY WORSE.

I MEAN, SURE I WAS HOPING SHE'D COME, BUT...

GOD, WHAT HORRIBLE TIMING!

301

NHK 3·5

AKITSUKI

AND ON TOP OF THAT, I HAVE TO CLEAN THE BATHS AGAIN TOMORROW.

OH MAN, THIS SUCKS.

ゴロー

PLUNK

WHAT THE HECK IS THAT...?

...

HEY, THERE'S A HOLE IN THE WALL.

YOU COULD HAVE AT LEAST PATCHED THIS UP, AYANO-SAN.

...!

FWICK

I WONDER IF IT BOTHERS THE GIRL NEXT DOOR.

HMM... I GUESS THIS HOLE GOES THROUGH TO THE ROOM NEXT DOOR...

THWAP

I-I WAS JUST ABOUT TO GET STARTED.

A-A-YANO-SAN-

YAMATO-KUUUUUN! DID YOU GET ALL YOUR THINGS UNPACKED YET?

CRACK

CRACK

BONK

OH NO!

HUH?

HUH?

IT-
IT'S
YOU!

.....

WHAT
THE
HECK
DO
YOU
THINK
YOU'RE
DOING?

SWAP

I-I
DIDN'T
MEAN
TO...

SMACK

UWAHH!
I-I'M
SORRY...

HMMPH, AFTER I WENT THROUGH ALL THE TROUBLE OF PLASTERING ON NEW WALL-PAPER.

BUT I JUST FIXED THIS SIDE.

IT- IT WAS ALREADY BROKEN.

WAAHHH!

ゴロ WOBBLE

ゴロ WOBBLE

YOU CAN'T JUST GO BREAKING DOWN THE WALLS, YAMATO-KUN.

WELL... IT'S AWFULLY EXPENSIVE. BESIDES, I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD BOTHER SOMEONE LIKE YOU, YAMATO-KUN.

DIDN'T YOU THINK I'D BE CURIOUS ABOUT IT?

WHY DIDN'T YOU FIX MY SIDE?

HE MAY GO TO THE SAME HIGH SCHOOL AS YOU, ASAHINA-SAN, BUT HE'S NOWHERE NEAR YOUR LEVEL.

YAMATO-KUN'S BEEN GETTING INTO TROUBLE EVER SINCE HE WAS A LITTLE KID.

I'M SORRY, ASAHINA-SAN. I'LL HAVE IT FIXED TOMOR-ROW.

WHAT HAVE I DONE...

WHA- WHAT?

OKAY... THANK YOU.

SHE DIDN'T GET IN BY BARELY PASSING HER ENTRANCE EXAMS LIKE YOU DID.

SUZUKA ASAHINA-SAN IS REALLY AMAZING.

SHE WAS RECRUITED BY A TRACK TEAM TALENT SCOUT.

SEE? ISN'T SHE AMAZING?

YEAH.

I KNEW SHE WAS COOL, BUT...

A TALENT SCOUT? WOW...

WELL...

I'LL DO MY BEST.

SHE MIGHT EVEN GO ON TO REPRESENT JAPAN SOMEDAY.

THEN I CAN BRAG TO EVERYBODY ABOUT HOW SHE USED TO LIVE IN MY APARTMENT COMPLEX.

IS SHE REALLY MY AGE...

SHE'S SO COOL... I MEAN SHE'S PRACTICALLY "PERFECT."

LISTEN. I WANT YOU TO CLEAN UP THIS MESS AND GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM.

I'LL HAVE THE REPAIRMAN COME TOMORROW.

AND COM-PARED TO HER YOU'RE JUST...

HEY, GO ON, APOLO-GIZE!

YANK

I'M SOR-RY.

SLAM

...OKAY.

OH, AND ASAHINA-SAN, FEEL FREE TO HAVE HIM DO YOUR CLEANING OR ANYTHING ELSE YOU NEED.

GO AHEAD AND MAKE HIM DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.

OH MAN, WHY CAN'T I EVER GET ALONG WITH GIRLS LIKE HER...

OKAY.

BUT DON'T CUT ANY CORNERS.

CLEAN THIS PLACE UP AND GET OUT OF HERE.

HUH?

SWIP

SWIP

YOU GOT CHOSEN BY A SCOUT... JUST LIKE A CELEBRITY OR SOME-THING...

UM... THAT... THAT'S PRETTY IMPRES-SIVE...

AND THEN, SOMEHOW I'D MANAGE TO GET A HIT.

SO I WOULD ALWAYS SAY, "IF I CAN'T GET A HIT DURING THE GAME, THEN I'LL TREAT THE WHOLE TEAM TO SODAS."

SWIP

I WAS ON MY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL'S BASEBALL TEAM BACK IN THE COUNTRY, BUT...

I SUCKED AT HITTING, AND I COULDN'T CATCH WORTH CRAP. I WAS SO BAD. I WAS THE LAUGHING-STOCK OF THE TEAM.

I GUESS I'M GOOD UNDER PRESSURE.

.....

HUH? I'VE NEVER REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT IT, BUT...I GUESS I'D APOLOGIZE.

WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE IF YOU HADN'T GOTTEN A HIT?

I CAN'T STAND...

...PEOPLE WITH THAT WISHY-WASHY ATTITUDE.

DON'T APOLO-GIZE TO ME UNLESS YOU MEAN IT.

I HATE PHONY APOLO-GIES.

HUH? WHA-WHAT ARE YOU—

HUH...

UH... SORRY.

SLAM

DON'T TAKE IT SO SERI-OUSLY.

I WAS JUST TRYING TO BE FUNNY.

GRR

ピンポーン

BING BONG

302

SUZUKA ASAHINA

WHAT NOW?

STOP BUGGING ME ALREADY.

カチ

CLICK

UH... OH...I HEARD HE BROKE THE WALL, SO...

...OH, MIHO-CHAN... HE JUST LEFT.

...UMM...

WHAT?

UM... PLEASE, DON'T HATE YAMATO-KUN, OKAY?

HAVE YOU SEEN YAMATO-KUN?

DID YOU COME HERE JUST TO TELL ME THAT?

I...I MEAN, WHAT HAPPENED IN THE BATHS TODAY... THAT WASN'T HIS FAULT, IT WAS SAOTOME-SAN...

ASAHIYU BATHS

AND THEN...I PUSHED HIM.. AND...

YEAH.

BECAUSE... IT KIND OF SEEMS LIKE YOU HATE YAMATO-KUN.

I KNOW HE'S KIND OF A DORK, AND HE MIGHT BE A LITTLE SLOW, BUT HE'S ACTUALLY A REALLY GREAT GUY.

HE'S NICE... AND HE MAKES REALLY GOOD OKONO-MIYAKI.

WELL, MAY-BE A LITTLE BIT.

I MEAN, HE DID BREAK MY WALL.

YOU'RE PRETTY ATTACHED...

...TO YAMATO-KUN, AREN'T YOU?

302

SUZUKA AS

AM I?

HMMM

WELL, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT, BUT...

I JUST FEEL THIS NEED TO TAKE CARE OF HIM.

I GUESS IT'S WHAT THEY CALL MATERNAL INSTINCT.

.....

WAIT, MIHO-CHAN...

OKAY?

SO... CUT HIM A LITTLE SLACK.

I'M SOR-RY, MIHO-CHAN, BUT...

THERE'S NO WAY I COULD EVER GET TO LIKE THAT GUY.

OKAY, MAYBE JUST A LITTLE.

THE BATHING HOURS ARE OVER, BUT I BET THE WATER IS STILL HOT.

IT'S AL-READY TEN...

SEIKO

THAT REMINDS ME, BECAUSE OF THAT DORKY GUY, I DIDN'T EVEN GET TO TAKE MY BATH...

...THAT'S NOT REALLY RELAXING ENOUGH.

I COULD USE THE BATH IN MY ROOM, BUT...

IT'S NOT LIKE I'LL GET IN TROUBLE OR ANYTHING.

BUT...I GUESS IT CAN WAIT TILL TOMOR-ROW.

I COULD DO IT NOW...

I GUESS I SHOULD UNPACK MY BAGS.

...IT COULD-N'T BE ASA-HINA, COULD IT...

YES.

BING-BONG

BING-BONG

HUH?

MAN... ASAHINA SURE IS HARD TO GET ALONG WITH.

I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO TALK TO HER.

WA... WAIT, WE SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS, SAOTOME-SAN.

HI, THERE! I'LL BE YOUR ESCORT THIS EVENING! ♡

...ESCORT?

I

I

MY...

UGH, YOU REEK OF BOOZE.

BLEAH

I'M NOT...

...DRUNK

SAO-TOME-SAN!

STEP

STEP

SORRY, NO EXCHANGES OR REFUNDS.

A-ARE YOU DRUNK?

I CAN'T EVEN UNDER-STAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.

THWUMP

ME... GU...MI-CHAN! IF THU KEEP THALKING THIKE THAT, GUYTH ARE GOONA THEALP UM ULLL.

PLEASE DO.

I.... I'M SORRY, YAMATO-KUN. I'LL GET RID OF HER.

WAH!

KYAA!

FWUMP

...THE ATTACK!

WORDS ARE MEAN-ING-LESS WHEN IT COMES TO LOVE.

WHAT'S REAL-LY IM-POR-TANT IS...

WHAT THE—

!

A-ARE YOU OKAY?

COUGH. COUGH.

HUH? THE BOOZE IS ALL GONE.

THWUP

STOP WHINING, AND DRINK!

WOULD YOU SHUT UP!

...AND SO YOUNG YAMATO AND THE BEAUTIFUL MEGUMI PRESSED THEIR BODIES TOGETHER, AND THEIR THROB-BING...

YOU DRANK ALL MY DOM PERIGNON, DIDN'T YOU?

THIS GIRL'S CRAZY.

SAUNA ROOM

Rules and Regulations.

1. Do not bring food or drink into the sauna.

2. Do not stay in the sauna longer than 12 minutes...

THIS IS THE LIFE.

AHHHH

THEN I CAN BRAG TO EVERYBODY ABOUT HOW SHE LIVED IN MY COMPLEX.

SHE MIGHT EVEN GO ON TO REPRESENT JAPAN SOME-DAY.

.....

I'M SO GLAD I DECIDED TO LIVE HERE.

THIS IS THE PERFECT WAY TO RELAX AFTER A HARD DAY OF PRACTICE.

WE'LL BE ROOTING FOR YOU.

GOOD LUCK IN HIGH SCHOOL, ASAHINA-SENPAI!

AND I GET TO USE THE BATHS AS MUCH AS I WANT AT NO EXTRA CHARGE.

THE PRINCIPAL WAS VERY IMPRESSED.

YOU'RE THE PRIDE AND JOY OF THE SCHOOL.

I HEARD YOU GOT UP TO 169 CM! THAT'S A KANAGAWA HIGH JUMP RECORD.

YOU SURPRISED EVEN ME, ASAHINA.

THAT SINGLE JUMP OF MINE BROUGHT IN HIGH SCHOOL TRACK SCOUTS FROM ALL OVER...

169 CENTI-METERS...

BUT...

ｻﾗｯ SWIP

EVERYBODY HAS SUCH HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ME...

ｺﾄｯ THWINK

SO, I HAVE TO KEEP JUMPING HIGHER AND HIGHER, BUT...

I'M LISTEN-ING.

CRUNCH CRUNCH

YEAH, YEAH...

HEY! ARE YOU LISTENING, YAMATO-KUN?

THUNK

I HAVE A NAME YOU KNOW. I'M MEGUMI MATSU-MOTO.

THERE'S MORE TO ME THAN JUST MY BOOBS. UNDER-STAND?

EVERY SINGLE GUY WHO TRIES TO PICK ME UP IS EXACTLY THE SAME.

ZZZZ

THEY TAKE ONE LOOK AT ME AND IT'S ALL ABOUT BOOBS, BOOBS, BOOBS...

PEANUTS

SHE'S SO AN-NOY-ING.

WHAT A PATHETIC DRUNK...

OKAY, OKAY.

SLAM

LISTEN TO ME!

YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A SICK BOOBY FREAK!

YOU'RE JUST LIKE EVERY OTHER GUY AREN'T YOU, YAMATO-KUN? ALL YOU CARE ABOUT IS MY BOOBS.

TAKE A GOOD HARD LOOK AT 'EM!

SO GO AHEAD AND LOOK! GO ON!

THHPT

BOING

THIS REAL-LY...

...SUCKS.

WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU LOOK-ING AT?

SLAP!

BWAHH!

AAHHHHHH!

LOOK! LOOK! LOOK!

UH... UM, MEGU-MI...

BOING

BOING

I WONDER HOW LONG I'VE BEEN IN HERE.

PHEW

PHEW

CLINK

I'VE GOT TO LIVE UP TO THEIR EXPECTATIONS.

GOT TO...

GOT TO SHED JUST A LITTLE MORE WEIGHT.

ZZZ

ZZZ

I'VE GOTTA GO CLEAN THE BATHS.

UWAH! IT'S ALREADY ELEVEN.

WHAT AM I S'POSED TO DO WITH THESE TWO.

SHE FINALLY PASSED OUT.

OH WELL, SHE ALREADY HATES ME ANYWAY.

CLOP CLOP

GREAT... I BET ASAHINA HEARD ALL THAT DRUNKEN SQUABBLING.

AYANO-SAN IS GONNA BE PISSED.

UH-OH, THE LIGHTS ARE STILL ON.

HUH?

EN'S BATH

!

OH MAN, THE SAUNA IS—

ASAHINA?

A—

WAKE UP, ASAHINA!

BAM

BAM

HEY! ARE YOU OKAY?

WAIT... HOW LONG HAS SHE BEEN IN THERE?

WHAT'S SHE DOING IN THERE AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT...

IS SHE UNCON-SCIOUS?

ASAHINA!

...LEAVE HER LIKE THIS.

I CAN'T JUST...

HRRMPH

CLICK

CLICK

WHY'D YOU HAVE TO GO AND PUT AN INSIDE LOCK ON THE DOOR, AYANO-SAN?

AYANO-SAN!

CLOP

FOR-GIVE ME...

SCHWACK

SO HOT...

SCHWOOP

ASAHINA!

ARE YOU OKAY?

HEY! ASAHINA!

ASAHINA!

WAKE UP!

SHE WILL?

I GAVE HER SOME WATER AND HER TEMPERATURE IS ALREADY STARTING TO COME BACK DOWN. SHE''LL BE FINE.

DON'T WORRY.

SHE'S JUST A LITTLE DEHYDRATED.

...COMING IN HERE CRYING, "ASAHINA IS DEAD."

YOU GAVE ME QUITE A SCARE...

SHE'S JUST SLEEPING.

OH... OKAY.

I GUESS I KIND OF PANICKED.

I...I DID? YEAH, WELL, SHE WOULDN'T WAKE UP.

UM...

YOU COULD'VE JUST ASKED ME FOR THE KEY.

YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO BREAK THE DOOR DOWN.

I'M THE ONE WHO'S PANICKING NOW. THE DOOR TO THE SAUNA IS COMPLETELY DESTROYED.

WHA—?

BUT I-IT WOULDN'T OPEN.

I WAS WORRIED I WAS ALREADY TOO LATE.

BUT...

THAT'S WHAT I LOVE ABOUT YOU.

WELL... I GUESS YOU DO HAVE A GOOD HEART, YAMATO-KUN...

A-YA-NO-SA...

コト

THUNK

I'LL GO STRAIGHT-EN UP THE BATHS.

GIVE HER A LITTLE MORE WATER WHEN SHE COMES TO.

.....

BYE.

SLAM

ニャ――ウ…

MEOW.

IF I'D JUST GONE TO CLEAN THE BATHS A LITTLE SOONER...

I'M SORRY.

!?

カ

ッ

タ

ッ

タ

THUD

THAT'S OKAY.

WHAT'RE YOU, STUPID?

WHY DID YOU BREAK THE DOOR DOWN?

YOU'RE SO LOUD YOU WOKE ME UP.

YOU- YOU'RE AWAKE?

WHA—

WHA—

GRR

NEXT TIME, TRY READING THE RULES BEFORE YOU GO IN.

CAN'T YOU READ? IT SAYS THERE'S A TWELVE MINUTE MAX!

YOU'RE THE STUPID ONE.

WHY DO YOU THINK I BROKE THE DOOR DOWN?

I-I DID READ THEM.

WELL, NEXT TIME TRY FOLLOW-ING THEM.

SNIFF

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU... HOW COULD YOU—

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WENT INTO THE SAUNA AFTER HOURS. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO PASSED OUT IN THERE.

I'M SORRY, OKAY?

I KNOW!

HUH?

!?

SHOCK

WHA-?

I MEAN...

I JUST THOUGHT IF I LOST A LITTLE MORE WEIGHT, THEN MAYBE I COULD JUMP HIGHER NEXT TIME!

MY FRIENDS ...MY SEMPAI... MY TEACHERS... EVEN MY PARENTS...

...EVERY TIME THEY SEE ME, ALL THEY DO IS SHOUT, "GO, ASAHINA! JUMP HIGHER! HIGHER!"

NOBODY WAS MORE SHOCKED BY MY RECORD THAN I WAS!

YOU THINK IT'S EASY FOR ME TO JUMP 169 CENTI-METERS?

...SO SCARED SOME-TIMES!

I JUST GET...

I WAS SO ABSORBED IN IT THAT I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER WHAT I DID.

.....

ASAHINA...

AND NOW, EVERYBODY HAS THESE CRAZY EXPECTA-TIONS...

...AND THEY KEEP RAISING THE BAR HIGHER AND HIGHER...

WELL...

I DON'T REALLY KNOW MUCH ABOUT TRACK AND...

I SURE AS HECK DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE HIGH JUMP, BUT...

IF YOU DID IT ONCE...

I'M SURE YOU CAN DO IT AGAIN.

HUH?

EASY FOR YOU TO SAY...

WELL...

YEAH, BUT...

JUST FORGET ABOUT WHAT ALL THOSE PEOPLE THINK.

I MEAN, YOU JOINED THE TRACK TEAM BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT YOU LOVE TO DO, RIGHT?

LISTEN, WHY DON'T YOU JUST TRY HAVING A LITTLE MORE FUN...

SCRINCH

INSTEAD OF ALWAYS WALKING AROUND WITH YOUR FACE ALL SCRUNCHED UP LIKE THIS.

HEY!

WELL, I SHOULD PROBABLY GO HELP AYANO-SAN..

WAH! HEY, I GUESS YOU'RE FEELING BETTER.

THWAP

I DON'T LOOK LIKE THAT!

DON'T TELL ANYBODY I CRIED...

OKAY, YAMATO-KUN?

OKAY, FINE.

.....

GEE, I DON'T KNOW... AFTER ALL THAT STUFF YOU SAID TO ME...

W-WAIT! COME ON, PROMISE YOU WON'T TELL!

OH, AND HAND ME THE WATER.

YEAH, YEAH.

I THOUGHT SHE WAS HARD TO GET ALONG WITH, BUT...

GET ME A NEW TOWEL TOO!

ASAHIYU BATHS

DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK!

MAYBE SHE'S JUST GOING THROUGH A DIFFICULT TIME.

I THINK I'M...

...STARTING TO FIGURE ASAHINA OUT.

AAWWWW

I'M SO SLEEPY, ASAHINA.

I DON'T SEE WHY YOU NEED ME TO COME WITH YOU TO MORNING PRACTICE.

ESPECIALLY DURING SPRING BREAK...

SO WHY DON'T YOU TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT YOU SAID...

AND START BEING A LITTLE MORE SUPPORTIVE!

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID I COULD DO IT AGAIN.

WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANYTHING?

CLINK

YEAH, YEAH.

S-SORRY... HOW MANY CENTI-METERS DID YOU SAY?

IT'S THE FIRST JUMP OF THE DAY, SO LET'S START OUT WITH 164 CENTI-METERS.

カシャ

KACHINK

MISHI

AH...

WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING?

HEY, IT'S CROOKED!

OUI, MA-DAME.

IT'S PRETTY HIGH!

THERE. GO AHEAD AND JUMP, IF YOU THINK YOU CAN MAKE IT!

DON'T GET SLOPPY!

165

カシャ

CLICK

カシャ

CLICK

YOU'RE SO PICKY!

カシャ

STEP

HERE I GO...

WHOOSH

THIS IS NO-THING...

DON'T UN-DER-ESTI-MATE ME.

SHE'S SO COOL.

WHOA...

CHING

カラーン

CHING

FWUMP

FWICK

I CAN'T BE-LIEVE IT...

I'VE NEVER HAD A PROBLEM CLEARING THAT HEIGHT.

HEY, YOU HIT THE POLE.

YOU BARELY MADE IT OVER.

I'VE NEVER HAD A DAY LIKE THIS.

YOU KNOW?

UH... WELL... SOME DAYS ARE LIKE THAT.

JUST STOP IT, OKAY.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE EXCUSES FOR ME.

WELL... MAYBE YOU'RE A LITTLE TIRED FROM YESTERDAY.

UH... OH...

I MEAN I...

WHAT AM I GONNA DO? HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO MAKE 169 CENTI-METERS WHEN I CAN BARELY MAKE IT OVER 164.

WHA-

WHAT THE-?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WHAT HEIGHT? 164 CENTI-METERS OF COURSE.

WHAT HEIGHT DID YOU PUT THE BAR AT?

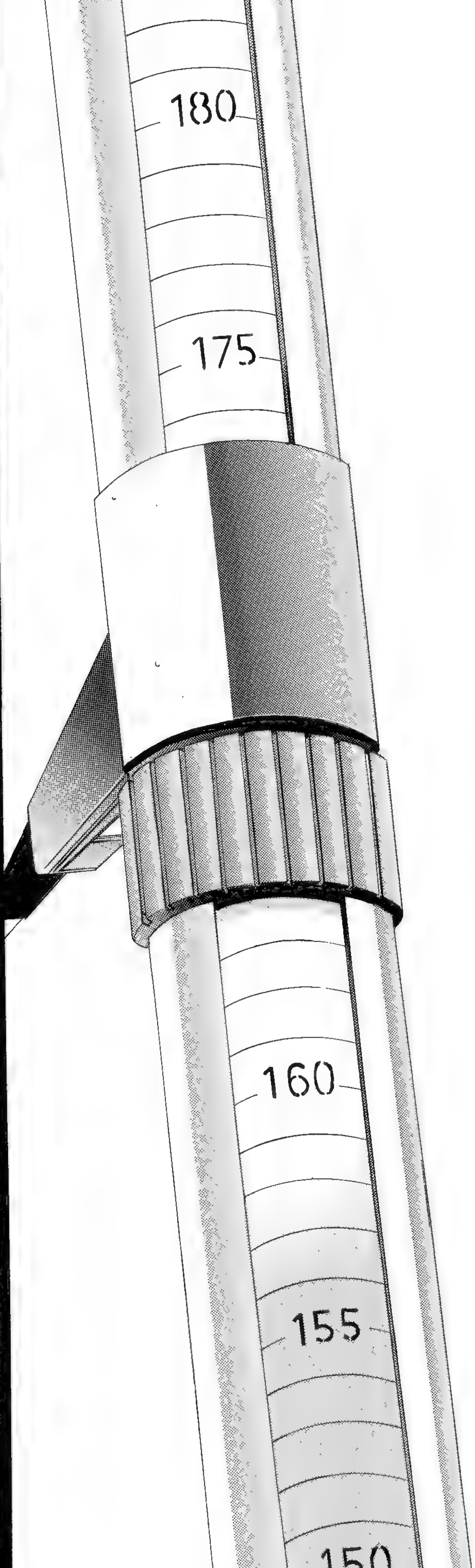
H-HEY, YAMA-TO-KUN...

164 CENTI-METERS.

SEE? LOOK.

WHAT? WELL, HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO KNOW?

NO! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO LINE THE TOP OF THE BAR UP AT 164 CENTI-METERS, YOU IDIOT!



NOW WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?

YOU REALLY ARE CLUELESS!

HUH?

173 CENTI-METERS... ON THAT DAY... ALTHOUGH IT WAS UNOFFICIAL...

B—

BECAUSE OF YOU, I...

HER JUMP TIED THE TWELFTH PLACE NATIONAL RECORD FOR THE HIGHEST JUMP OF ANY FEMALE JUNIOR HIGH STUDENT IN HISTORY.

175

I SET A NEW RECORD WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING IT!

AT THAT MOMENT, ASAHINA SEEMED LIKE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON.

...BUT MORE IMPORTANT...

AND SHE LOOKED CUTER THAN...

..ANY GIRL I'D EVER SEEN IN MY ENTIRE LIFE.

158,051 YEN.*

THAT'LL BE...

*APPROXIMATELY $1500

HUH?

.....

I'LL HELP PITCH IN FOR THE DOOR...

158,051 YEN...

MOM, THAT'S SO MEAN!

THAT'S HOW MUCH IT COST TO FIX THE HOLE IN YOUR ROOM AND THE DOOR TO THE SAUNA.

I PAID THE BILL, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY ME BACK BY WORKING FOR FREE FOR THE NEXT THREE MONTHS.

WHA...

WHA...

KYA!

CRASH

SAOTOME-SAN, MY HEAD HURTS...

HUH... WHERE ARE WE?

AH, YAMATO-KUN.

WE JUST HAD THAT FIXED.

WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU GUYS DOING?

MAKING STUFF UP?

H-HEY... STOP MAKING STUFF UP!

HOW... HOW DID YOU KNOW—

WHAT?

YOU DID SEE MEGUMI-CHAN'S BARE BREASTS, DIDN'T YOU? YOU BOOBY FREAK!

LAST NIGHT WAS AMAZING. ♡

WHAT A PLAYBOY YOU ARE... TWO GIRLS AT THE SAME TIME!

I SEE YOU'RE CLUELESS WHEN IT COMES TO GIRLS TOO.

HMM...

UH...

UM...

HMMPH!

NOW IT'LL BE FIVE MONTHS WITH NO PAY.

I HATE YOU, YAMATO-KUN!

N-NO!

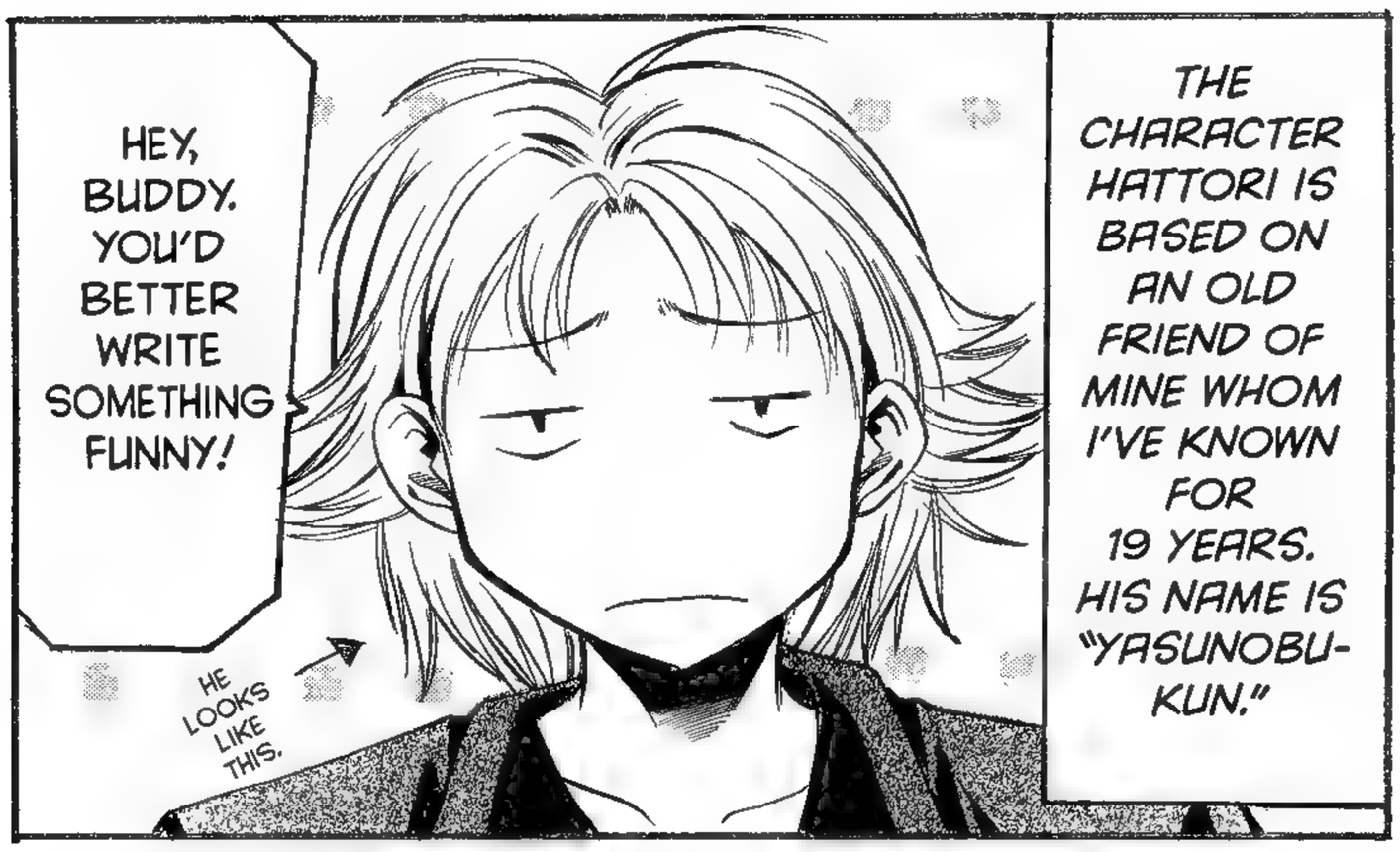
I'M STARTING TO GET THAT FEELING THAT...

THAT'LL BE 100,000 YEN FOR OUR ALL-NIGHT ESCORT SERVICES.

NO WAY!

ASAHIYU BATHS

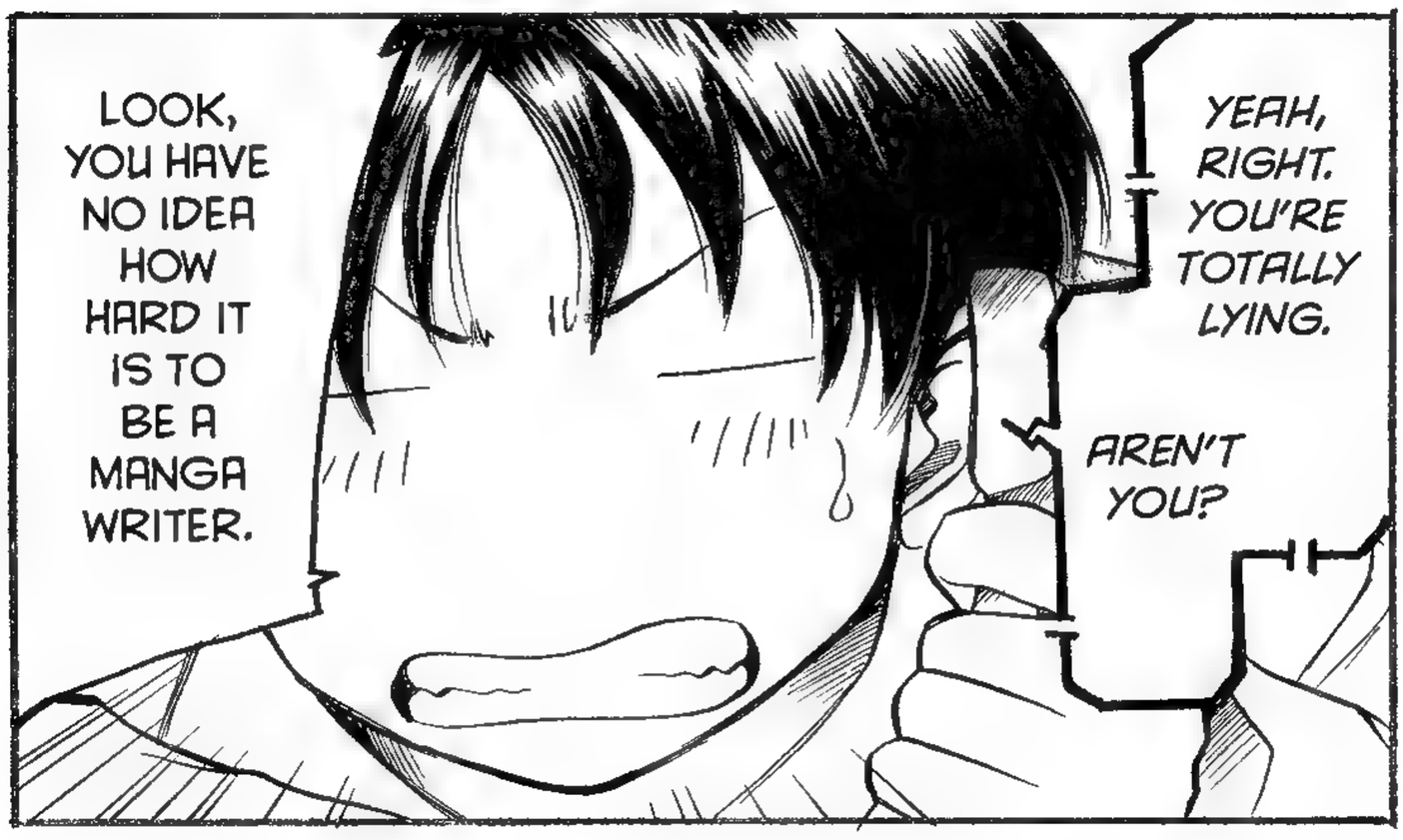
...MY NEW LIFE ISN'T GONNA BE SO EASY.


HEY, BUDDY. YOU'D BETTER WRITE SOMETHING FUNNY!
HE LOOKS LIKE THIS.
THE CHARACTER HATTORI IS BASED ON AN OLD FRIEND OF MINE WHOM I'VE KNOWN FOR 19 YEARS. HIS NAME IS "YASUNOBU-KUN."

SORRY, I'VE GOT TONS OF WORK TO DO.
HELLO, SEO? WANNA GO PLAY SOME SLOTS?
WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER SO LONG THAT WE CAN READ EACH OTHER LIKE A BOOK.

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER ONE

BAD COMPANY



...THEN I COULD START OVER FROM SCRATCH. I BET MY LIFE WOULD BE TOTALLY DIFFERENT.

SHWIP

IF I COULD JUST GO TO HIGH SCHOOL IN TOKYO...

...BUT THE TRUTH IS, IT'S REALLY NOT THAT DRAMATIC.

MOST PEOPLE COME HERE WITH RIDICULOUS EXPECTATIONS LIKE THAT...

I'M STAYING WITH MY AUNT IN EXCHANGE FOR HELPING OUT AROUND HER PLACE.

SIGH.

I GUESS I'M NO DIFFERENT THAN ANYONE ELSE.

I'M JUST YOUR AVERAGE FIFTEEN YEAR OLD... LIVING IN YOUR AVERAGE APARTMENT... THE ONLY THING DIFFERENT IS...

IT NEVER ENDS.

Suzuka

IT'S AN ALL-GIRLS APARTMENT COMPLEX!

旭湯

ASAHIYU BATHS

#1
Yamato

カポ

SPLASH

N-NO, THEY DIDN'T.

247

248

243

249

HEY, MEGUMI-CHAN. YOUR BOOBS GOT BIGGER AGAIN, DIDN'T THEY?

KYA!

YEAH, THEY DID. YOU MUST'VE LET SOMEONE SQUEEZE THEM.

AND THE ONE IN THE GLASSES IS MEGUMI MATSUMOTO (AGE 20). SHE'S A PRETTY NORMAL GIRL, BUT WHEN SHE DRINKS, SHE TURNS INTO A MONSTER.

STOP IT!

HOW ABOUT THAT, MISSY?

YOU LIKE THAT, HUH?

TO HER, EVERY MAN IS A WALKING DOLLAR BILL.

THESE TWO ARE STUDENTS AT a LOCAL UNIVERSITY. THE TAN ONE IS YUUKA SAOTOME (AGE 20).

RUMBLE

...GEEZ, CAN'T THEY KEEP IT DOWN?

RUMBLE

NO, STOP IT, SAOTOME-SAN!

LET ME SQUEEZE THOSE BOOBS!

AH... OH, NO... IT'S OUT OF FUEL!

I TOTALLY FORGOT!

HUH?

BEEP

ピー ピー ピー

BEEP

YAMATO-KUN!

SO? HOW'S THE BOILER RUNING?

BEEP

BEEP

HEH... WELL, I THINK IT'S KINDA OUT OF FUEL.

MIHO-CHAN!

I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE, SO I BROUGHT YOU SOME.

WOW! YOU'RE SO AWESOME, MIHO-CHAN!

Angry Bunny

SHE'S ALWAYS REALLY NICE TO ME, BUT SHE CAN BE A LITTLE PRECOCIOUS.

I WAS JUST ABOUT TO.

YOU ARE SO CLUELESS. TRY CHECKING THE FUEL LEVEL NEXT TIME!

THIS IS MIHO FUJIKAWA (AGE 13). SHE'S THE LANDLADY'S DAUGHTER AND SHE'S ALSO MY COUSIN.

CLICK

HEY!

CLICK

HEY!

Y-YUUKA-SAN!

カチ

CLICK

WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON? THERE'S NO HOT WATER!

CLOP

CLOP

OH HI, YAMATO-KUN.

GET OUT OF HERE, YOU PERVERT!

カ!!
FWICK

KYA!

WAH!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

YOU DON'T MIND MY BEING HERE DO YOU, YAMATO-KUN?

WAH!

FWOOP

AND THEN THERE'S HER...

...SHE'S THE TYPE OF GIRL I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO GET ALONG WITH.

YAMATO-KUN!

?!

AH!

THUD

A-
ASA...
THINA-
THAN!

YOU
NEVER
GET
ENOUGH...

...DO
YOU?

BRRR

"SHIVER"

N...
NO!
LISTEN!
IT'S
NOT—

WHAT-
EVER.

IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE ME? TCH, WHAT-EVER...

FWICK

HELP ME! HELP ME! BOO HOO HOO.

WAH! OH, NO! MY GIRLFRIEND SUZUKA-CHAN HATES ME NOW. WHAT AM I GONNA DO?

HER NAME IS SUZUKA ASAHINA (AGE 15). SHE GOES TO THE SAME SCHOOL THAT I'M TRANSFER-RING INTO.

SHE'S ON A TRACK SCHOLARSHIP, AND SHE SET THE SCHOOL'S (UNOFFICIAL) HIGH JUMP RECORD. 173 CENTIMETERS.

SHE'S THE PERFECT GIRL, AND SHE CAN'T STAND CLUELESS GUYS LIKE ME. WE'RE EXACT OPPOSITES.

SHE'S ALWAYS GRUMPY AND SHE ALMOST NEVER LAUGHS.

I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO IDEA WHAT THE HECK SHE'S THINKING.

旭湯

ASAHIYU BATHS

YOU'RE HOLDING YOUR CHOP-STICKS WRONG, YAMATO-KUN.

GOBBLE カリ

GOBBLE カリ

I NEVER IMAGINED I'D GET TO EAT LIKE THIS... AND IT'S FREE TO BOOT.

YOU SURE ARE A GOOD COOK, AYANO-SAN.

YOU'VE GOT RICE ALL OVER YOUR FACE, SILLY.

HA HA.

SEE? YOU'RE SUCH A LITTLE BABY.

THANKS... IT'S SO NICE OF YOU TO FIX DINNER FOR ME.

WHAT AM I, A DOG?

PRET-TY MUCH.

I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT.

ESPECIALLY YAMATO-KUN. THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT HE'D BE PUTTING INTO THAT MOUTH OF HIS IF I DIDN'T FEED HIM.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT... YOU TWO ARE GONNA BE SO BUSY WITH SCHOOL YOU WON'T HAVE TIME TO COOK.

STOP POINTING WITH YOUR CHOP-STICKS! HOW RUDE!

AREN'T YOU?

YOU COULD AT LEAST COOK FOR YOURSELF. I MEAN, YOU ARE A GIRL...

THAT REMINDS ME, YOU TWO START SCHOOL TOMORROW DON'T YOU?

I ALMOST FORGOT. WE'D BETTER CELEBRATE.

...CELE-BRATE?

WOULD YOU TWO STOP FIGHTING AND EAT ALREADY!

BUT SHE'S THE ONE WHO—

HMMPH.

HERE'S A BONE FOR YOU, GORO-CHAN.

HERE YOU GO.

MEOW

REALLY?

ALL RIGHT!

GORD

I'LL COOK UP SOMETHING REALLY SPECIAL FOR YOU.

YEAH. LET'S THROW A PARTY TO WELCOME BOTH OF YOU HERE AND TO CELEBRATE THE START OF THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR.

I'VE GOT A REALLY BUSY DAY TOMORROW.

THE ONLY THING IS...

IT'S NOTHING, REALLY. I DID THE SAME THING WHEN SAOTOME-SAN AND MATSUMOTO-SAN MOVED IN.

YOU-YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO TO ALL THAT TROU-BLE.

I HATE TO ASK, BUT... YOU TWO WOULDN'T MIND...

...GOING SHOPPING FOR ME, WOULD YOU?

HE CAN'T REMEMBER A THING.

. . . . .

WE'LL NEED A LOT OF STUFF AND I'M JUST NOT SURE THAT YAMATO-KUN CAN HANDLE IT ON HIS OWN.

WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO GO WITH HER?

YOU'VE GOT SCHOOL TOMOR-ROW, MIHO.

I WANNA GO TOO!

THE... ...TWO OF US?

SO...

I WANT YOU TWO... ...TO GO TOGETHER!

SHOPPING? ...WITH HIM?

SHOP-PING? WITH HER?

THE NEXT DAY

旭湯

ピンポーン

BING BONG

WHAT'S TAKING HIM SO LONG...

GEEZ!

HURRY UP, YAMATO-KUN.

YOU-YOU'RE STILL SLEEP-ING!

WE WERE SUP-POSED TO LEAVE AT ELEVEN.

SCRATCH

SCRATCH

UHMM... MORN-ING.

カチャ

CLICK

AT LEAST PUT SOME PANTS ON.

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? THEY'RE JUST SWIM TRUNKS.

STOP THAT!

MMM...

SCRATCH

SCRATCH

...PUT SOME PANTS ON! IDIOT!

I SAID...

NOT IN FRONT OF ME!

AAHHH!

SMACK

!

OKAY...

BYOOONG

YOU WERE SO LOUD MY EARS GOT ALL SWOLLEN...

BYONG

GEEZ... DON'T YELL AT ME LIKE THAT SO EARLY IN THE MORNING..

なります

スポーツ

OKAY, OKAY. I'LL SHUT UP.

GLARE じろ

.....

HUSTLE ざわ ざわ

BUSTLE

YOU'D BETTER LEAD THE WAY! I DON'T KNOW THIS TOWN VERY WELL YET.

OKAY, BUT... AREN'T YOU COLD, ASAHINA? YOUR SHOULDERS ARE TOTALLY STICKING OUT.

I'M FINE.

YEAH?

HMMM... THIS PLACE HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL.

...YEAH?

IT'S PRETTY COOL ISN'T IT? IT'S GOT THAT "OLD TOKYO" FEELING.

REALLY?

WHATEVER, CAN WE JUST GET ON WITH THE SHOPPING ALREADY?

THERE'RE SO MANY PEOPLE RUNNING AROUND EVERY-WHERE...

THIS CITY IS WAY TOO CROWDED FOR ME.

SHE WANTED US TO GET SOME STUFF FOR THE HOUSE TOO.

SHWIM

LET'S DO THAT FIRST.

H-HEY, WAIT!

WHOA!

TCHH. ONE MINUTE SHE'S GRUMPY AND THE NEXT MINUTE SHE'S ALL EX-CITED...

WHOA!

N-NO-THING...

WHAT?

IF I TOLD HER I SAW HER PANTIES, SHE'D KILL ME...

YOU ARE SO WEIRD.

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

TOILET SEAT COVER SIZE U

TOILET SEAT COVER SIZE O

YEAH... WHICH ONE DO YOU THINK WOULD FIT AYANO-SAN'S TOILET?

...HUH?

A TOILET SEAT COVER?

I DON'T KNOW... I'VE NEVER REALLY LOOKED AT HER TOILET THAT CLOSELY.

HMMPH

SHE PROBABLY HAS A SIZE U, JUST LIKE ALL THE OTHER ONES IN THE COMPLEX.

STU-PID ...?

HOW CAN YOU BE SO STUPID?

IT'LL PROBABLY FIT A SIZE U ANYWAY, IT'LL JUST BE A LITTLE LOOSE.

BUT, WHY DON'T WE JUST GET A SIZE O.

WE CAN'T GET THAT ONE. IT'S TOO UGLY.

HANG ON!

LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH.

OKAY, WELL, WE'VE GOT THAT ONE DOWN. WHAT'S NEXT?

NO WAY!

I CAN'T COME HOME WITH THAT THING! WHAT'S THAT GONNA SAY ABOUT MY SENSE OF STYLE?

HUH?

POOR GUY.

クス GIGGLE

OH DEAR.

クス GIGGLE

YOU ARE SO CLUELESS. WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

I DON'T SEE WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS ONE. BESIDES, IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE GONNA BE USING IT.

SHOPPING WITH A GIRL IS SUCH A PAIN IN THE BUTT.

UH... O... OKAY.

'CAUSE SHE'S SO PERFECT AND SHE CAN'T STAND CLUELESS GUYS LIKE ME.

HOUSEHOLD IT

ESPECIALLY HER.

UH... YEAH... THAT ONE LOOKS GOOD.

FWIP

THIS ONE!

GOD, ALL THAT OVER A TOILET SEAT... AND WE STILL HAVE TONS LEFT ON THE LIST.

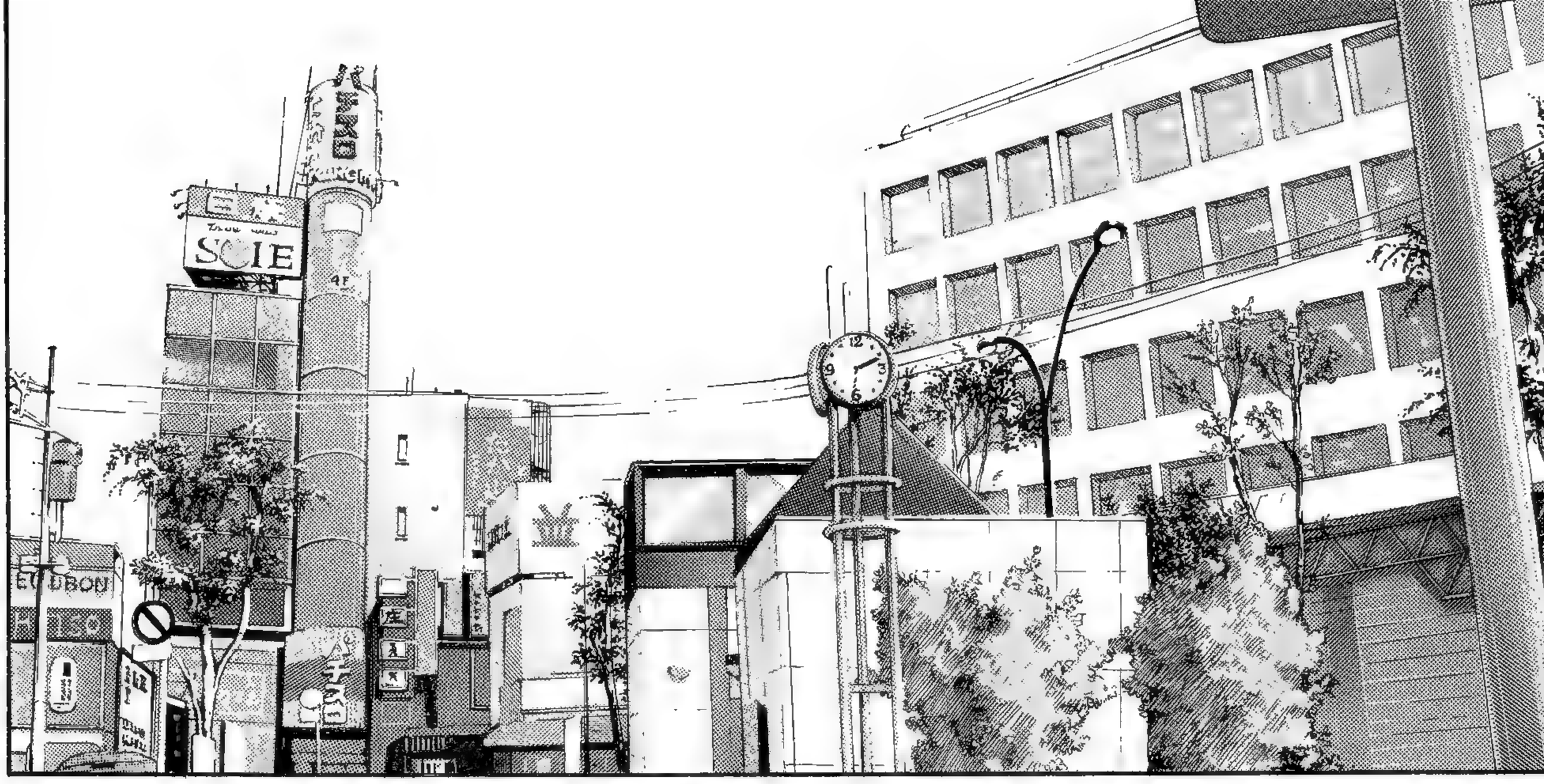
¥380

THAT'S IT! FOR-GET THIS ONE.

GEEZ, I HOPE WE MAKE IT BACK IN TIME FOR DINNER.

THAT DIDN'T SOUND VERY CON-VINC-ING...

HOW ABOUT...


SCIE
4F

SHUT UP! I JUST WANT TO GET THE MOST FOR MY MONEY, THAT'S ALL.
THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE!
ズシ〃〃 HEAVY
YOU KNOW WHAT? YOU'RE NOT PERFECT ...YOU'RE JUST INDECI-SIVE.
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT IT TOOK US THREE WHOLE HOURS OF RUNNING ALL AROUND TOWN JUST TO GET EVERYTHING ON THE LIST.

THIS CITY ISN'T AS BAD AS YOU THINK!
WHAT DO YOU CARE WHAT I THINK ABOUT THIS PLACE?

LET'S JUST GO HOME.
IF I STAY OUT HERE ANY LONGER, I'M GONNA SUFFO-CATE.

ALL RIGHT, LISTEN!
4
〃
GRR

HEY! LET'S GO GET SOME LUNCH! I KNOW THIS GREAT LITTLE PLACE.

ONCE YOU EAT THERE, EVEN YOU'LL START TO LIKE THIS CITY!

.....

WELCOME

アパートマンション

APARTMENTS

MENTS APARTMENTS

JUST SHUT UP AND FOLLOW ME. WE'RE ALMOST THERE.

AND THE STREETS ARE SO CLUT-TERED... I'VE HAD IT!

IT STINKS OUT HERE!

WHY ARE WE GOING THROUGH HERE?

I TOLD YOU. IT'S A SHORT-CUT!

THIS IS MY FAVORITE PLACE...

HERE IT IS!

FASHION MASSAGE
PINK ANGEL
60 MINUTES-
18,000 YEN
80 MINUTES-
23,000 YEN
100 MINUTES-
28,000 YEN

FASHION MASSAGE
PINK ANGEL
60 MINUTES-
18,000 YEN
80 MINUTES-
23,000 YEN
100 MINUTES-
28,000 YEN

. . . . . .

PINK ANGEL?

FASHION MASSAGE...

od's

NO! IT'S NOT!

IT USED TO BE A RESTAURANT... I SWEAR!

WOW... SO THIS IS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE, EH, YAMATO-KUN?

WHAT'S WRONG?

HUH?

HUH?

IT'S NOT ME!

THERE'S A GIRL NAMED "SUZUKA," BUT...

IT-IT COULDN'T BE—

I HATE THIS CITY!

I'M GOING HOME!

BEST SELLER

REALLY? ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT TRYING TO MAKE A LITTLE MONEY ON THE SIDE?

YOU'RE SUCH AN IDIOT!

SUZUKA

NO!

HEY... WAIT! THERE'S ONE MORE PLACE I--

STAY AWAY FROM ME!

I SAID WAIT!

ゼーッ

HAHH

ゼーッ

HAHH

SHUT UP!

REALLY, YOU'LL LOVE THIS PLACE!

WHOOSH

HEY, ASA-HINA!

NO CARS ALLOWED
12:00-3:00 PM

FWICKA

NO CARS
12:00-

WHOA...

!!

WAH!

SMACK

OH, BRO-THER...

CRASH

YOU'RE SUCH A KLUTZ, YAMATO-KUN...AND YOU'RE ALL TALK.

.....

I MEAN, IF THESE PLACES WERE SO GOOD, THEN WHY DID THEY ALL CLOSE DOWN?

...

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING MORE ABOUT THIS CITY THAN I DO!

YOU DRAG ME AROUNDTO ALL THESE PLACES, AND EVERY SINGLE ONE HAS GONE OUT OF BUSINESS...

W-WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING, YAMATO-KUN?

FWOOSH

THAT'S RIGHT! THERE'S ONE MORE SPOT!

JUST WAIT HERE!

AH!

SHOCK

I'LL BE BACK IN A SECOND!

FORGET IT. LET'S GO HOME!

HYUU

A SHRINE...

SO THERE ARE PLACES LIKE THIS OUT HERE.

FWAH

SHUSSE INARI SHRINE

I CAN SMELL THE TREES.

HYUU

HYUU

IT'S SO...

...NICE AND QUIET HERE.

SORRY I TOOK SO LONG!

AH... YAMA-TO-KUN!

WHERE WERE YOU, YAMATO-KUN?

NEVER MIND WHERE I WAS! LET'S CLIMB UP THESE STAIRS!

OH, BRO-THER...

YEAH!

ガラ

ガラ

BONG

BONG

YOU WANNA PRAY FOR SUCCESS!

CLAP

CLAP

THE SHUSSE INARI-SAN IS THE GOD OF SUCCESS.

THE INARI-SAN WILL COME AFTER YOU!

DON'T SAY THAT! YOU'LL ANGER THE GODS!

PRAY FOR SUCCESS? *DO* YOU REALLY BELIEVE IN THAT STUFF?

WHY DON'T YOU PRAY, ASAHINA?

MAYBE YOU'LL SUCCEED AT TRACK, AND SET A NEW RECORD.

DID WE COME ALL THE WAY HERE JUST TO PRAY?

YOU'RE SO RELI-GIOUS.

W-WHAT'S THAT?

YEAH, BUT THAT'S NOT ALL.

HERE.

IT'S A CHAIN, BUT THE MANAGER TRIES TO CARRY STUFF THAT OTHER STORES DON'T.

FWIP

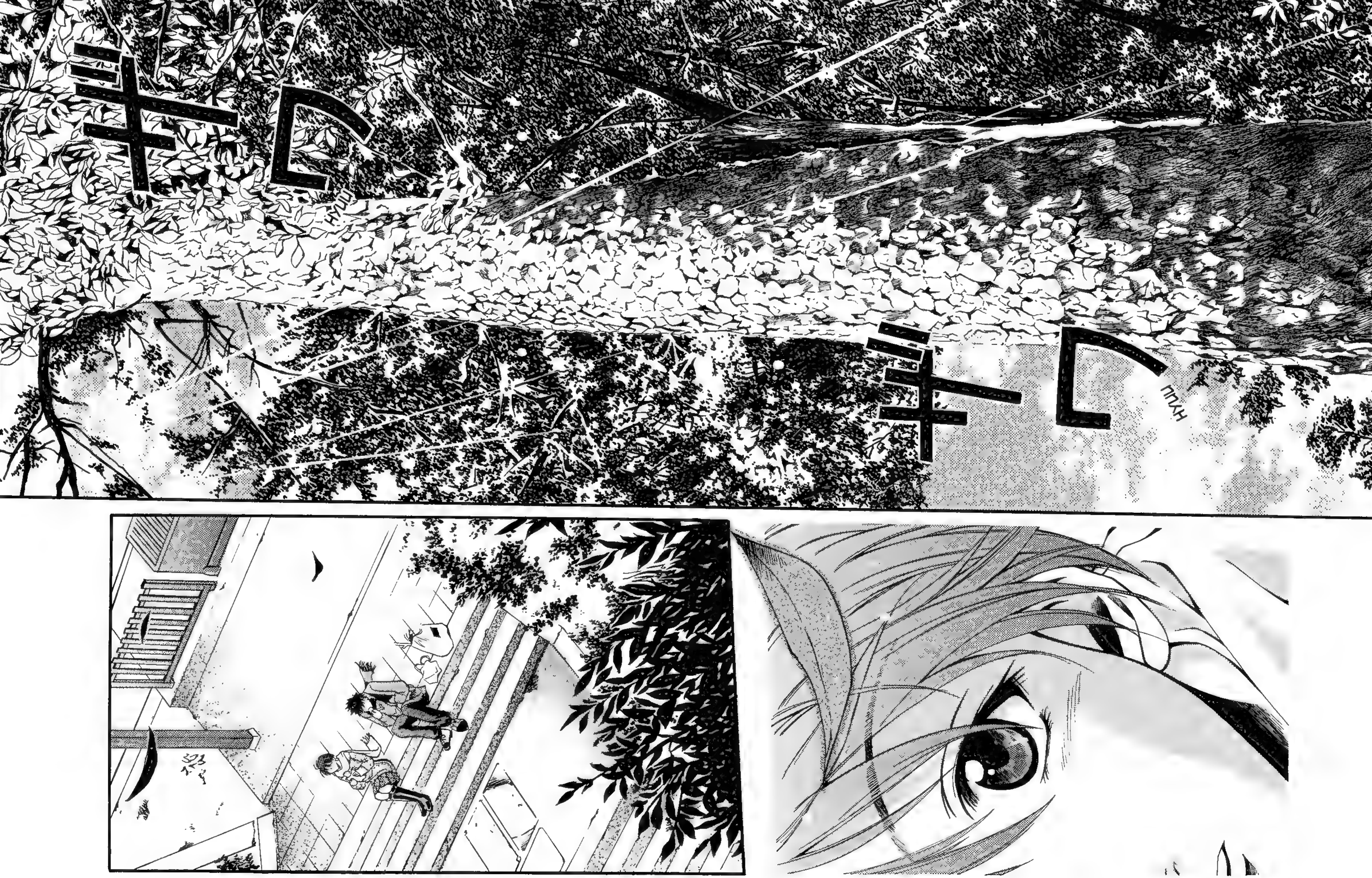
THE CON-VENIENCE STORE OVER THERE IS THE ONLY PLACE YOU CAN GET THEM.

IT'S A BEEF AND POTATO CRO-QUETTE.

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S GONNA ANGER THE GODS.

WHATEVER... JUST TRY IT. IT'S REALLY GOOD.

I USED TO GET ONE OF THESE AND EAT IT AT THIS SHRINE EVERY TIME I CAME TO VISIT AYANO-SAN.


ПЛАН

UH... OKAY.

HURRY UP AND EAT IT! IT'S GETTING COLD.

I WONDER IF IT'S ANY GOOD.

SNIFF

SNIFF

.....

.....

CHOMP

CHOMP

CRUNCH

AH...

I KNOW!

THEY'RE ADDICTIVE!

IT'S REALLY GOOD.

THE AT-MO-SPHERE!

HYUU

HYUU

THE ATMO-SPHERE MAKES IT TASTE GOOD!

N-NO...

I DON'T THINK IT'S JUST THE CROQUETTE...

HA, HA... MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.

YEAH, I GUESS THIS IS THE PERFECT PLACE TO ENJOY THEM!

SO, YAMATO-KUN... WHAT DID YOU PRAY FOR BACK THERE?

HUH? OH...

I JUST PRAYED THAT SOMETHING GOOD WOULD HAPPEN.

KIND OF VAGUE, ISN'T IT?

HUH?

YOU'RE SO CLUE-LESS.

YOU'RE GONNA PISS OFF THE GOD OF SUCCESS.

SHUT UP.

NOT EVERYBODY IN THIS WORLD HAS THEIR WHOLE LIFE FIGURED OUT LIKE YOU DO, ASAHINA.

YOU'RE FROM HIROSHIMA RIGHT, YAMATO-KUN?

YEAH! I LIVED WAY OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS.

WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?

SO WHY DID YOU COME ALL THE WAY TO TOKYO JUST TO GO TO SCHOOL?

HOW SHOULD I SAY THIS...

UMMM...

I GUESS...

SO I FIGURED, IF I REALLY WANT TO CHANGE MY LIFE...

...THEN TOKYO IS THE PLACE TO BE!

I GUESS I THOUGHT THAT IF I WENT TO A NEW SCHOOL IN A NEW CITY...

...AND LIVED IN A NEW ENVIRON-MENT... THEN MAYBE MY LIFE WOULD CHANGE.

HMM...

BUT THEN THE SCOUTS CAME, AND EVERYBODY STARTED SAYING, "YOU BELONG AT A FAMOUS SCHOOL. GO FOR IT, ASAHINA!"

I JUST WANTED TO HANG OUT WITH MY OLD FRIENDS AT MY OLD SCHOOL...

...AND JUST KEEP DOING TRACK LIKE I ALWAYS HAD.

...I...

...DIDN'T WANT TO CHANGE ANY-THING.

WHAT?

. . . . . .

...DID HELP ME SET A NEW HIGH JUMP REC-ORD...

...AND HE TOOK ME TO A REALLY NICE SPOT TOO.

PAT PAT

BUT THEN AGAIN, I GUESS THAT WEIRD NEIGHBOR OF MINE...

HUH?

THE TRUTH IS...I DIDN'T EVEN WANNA COME HERE.

. . . . . .

IT'S SO CROWDED AND CLAUSTRO-PHOBIC HERE...

AND MY NEIGHBOR IS SUCH A WEIRDO.

MAYBE I AM...

...STARTING TO FALL IN LOVE...

I-IN LOVE!?

SHOCK

!!

WHAT?

OH... HEH... YEAH... THE CITY...

SHOCK

I MEANT WITH THE CITY.

UH... REAL-LY?

WELL, I GUESS I SHOULD THANK YOU, YAMATO-KUN.

MAY-BE...

THINGS NEVER REALLY CHANGE ALL AT ONCE.

YOU'RE WEL-COME.

WE'D BETTER HEAD HOME...

...BEFORE AYANO-SAN GETS MAD!

BUT...

THE MOMENT I SAW ASAHNA'S SMILE...

I FELT...

...SOMETHING INSIDE ME...

WELCOME...

WELCOME

YAMATO-KUN AND SUZUKA-CHAN!

...BEGIN TO CHANGE.

OKAY. EVERY-THING'S READY TO GO.

THANK YOU.

THIS KIND OF STUFF ALWAYS EMBAR-RASSES ME.

SH-SHUT UP! STOP GOOFING AROUND!

HUH?

AND NOW THE NEWLY-WEDS WILL CUT THE FIRST PIECE OF CAKE TOGETHER, SYMBOLIZING THE BEGINNING OF THEIR NEW LIFE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.

YOU'RE ONLY HERE SO YOU CAN EAT MY MOM'S FOOD.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU! YOU EVEN BROUGHT BOOZE!

YOU'RE SUCH A LITTLE BRAT. HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD THE PHRASE "THE MORE THE MERRIER"?

WHAT'RE YOU TWO DOING HERE ANY-WAY?

THERE'S NO ROOM FOR YOU!

BUT...

IT'S OKAY, MIHO. THERE'S PLENTY FOR EVERYONE.

WE JUST WANTED TO JOIN THE PARTY.

YOU CAN CELEBRATE WITH US, GORO-CHAN.

HEAR THAT? THERE'S PLENTY!

OKAY, LET'S EAT! PASS ME SOME FRIED CHICKEN.

MEOW

SAO-TOME-SAN, YOU'RE SO RUDE.

LET YAMATO-KUN HAVE SOME FIRST!

HEY, I MADE THAT!

PARTIES LIKE THIS CAN BE FUN ONCE IN A WHILE, YOU KNOW?

THEY'RE FOR-GETTING ABOUT THE GUESTS OF HONOR.

HA, HA... THIS PARTY IS ALREADY GETTING OUT OF HAND.

くす

HEE, HEE...

THAT'S NOT A NICE THING TO SAY ABOUT AYANO-SAN'S COOKING.

...YEAH, I GUESS.

AFTER ALL, IT'S THE "ATMO-SPHERE" THAT MAKES THE FOOD TASTE GOOD, RIGHT?

EEW, YOU REEK OF BOOZE!

FWAP

BLEAH

WELL... YOU TWO SEEM TO BE GETTING ALONG WELL.

THIS GUY'S A REAL PERVERT. THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT HE MIGHT DO IF YOU LET DOWN YOUR GUARD.

BE CAREFUL, SUZUKA-CHAN!

MAKING STUFF UP?

STOP MAKING STUFF UP.

YOU'RE RIGHT. I'LL BE CAREFUL.

OR MAYBE I'M TOO LATE.

...!

BLUSH

FULU

ACTUALLY ...I JUST HAPPENED TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF YOU TODAY.

YOU WERE ON THE ESCALA-TOR BEHIND SUZUKA-CHAN... STARING RIGHT AT HER LITTLE--

TH—

THAT'S CRAZY!

I CAUGHT IT ALL ON MY CELL PHONE! I'LL NEED 10,000 YEN* IF YOU WANT THE EVIDENCE DESTROYED.

WHY ARE YOU DO-ING THIS?

ハッ!

YOU IDIOT!

* $100

WAAH! OKAY! OKAY! I'LL PAY.

OH, REALLY? HEY SUZUKA-CHAN!

I'VE GOT A LITTLE VIDEO HERE YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN SEEING.

I SAW YOU LOOKING UP SUZUKA-CHAN'S SKIRT TODAY!

YOU SHOULDN'T BE DOING THAT, YOU KNOW! IT'S SEXUAL HARASSMENT.

OH, BY THE WAY YAMATO-KUN...

Y-YEAH...

NO, I...I WAS...

BEEP

I GUESS I'LL JUST DELETE IT.

OH, GREAT. SHE BLEW IT.

I WAS HOPING THAT IF I MADE A FRESH START IN TOKYO... MAYBE MY LIFE WOULD CHANGE.

GROSS!

COULDA FOOLED ME... WITH THAT HUGE GRIN ON YOUR FACE.

REALLY?

...

I-I DIDN'T MEAN TO!

OR MAYBE I REALLY DID ANGER THE GODS OF THAT SHRINE.

MAYBE IT WAS THE GODS ANSWERING M PRAYERS.

...JUST AS I HAD HOPED IT WOULD.

ASAHIYU BATHS

NO—

STOP, GORO-CHAN! THAT'S MY CHICKEN!

SNIKT

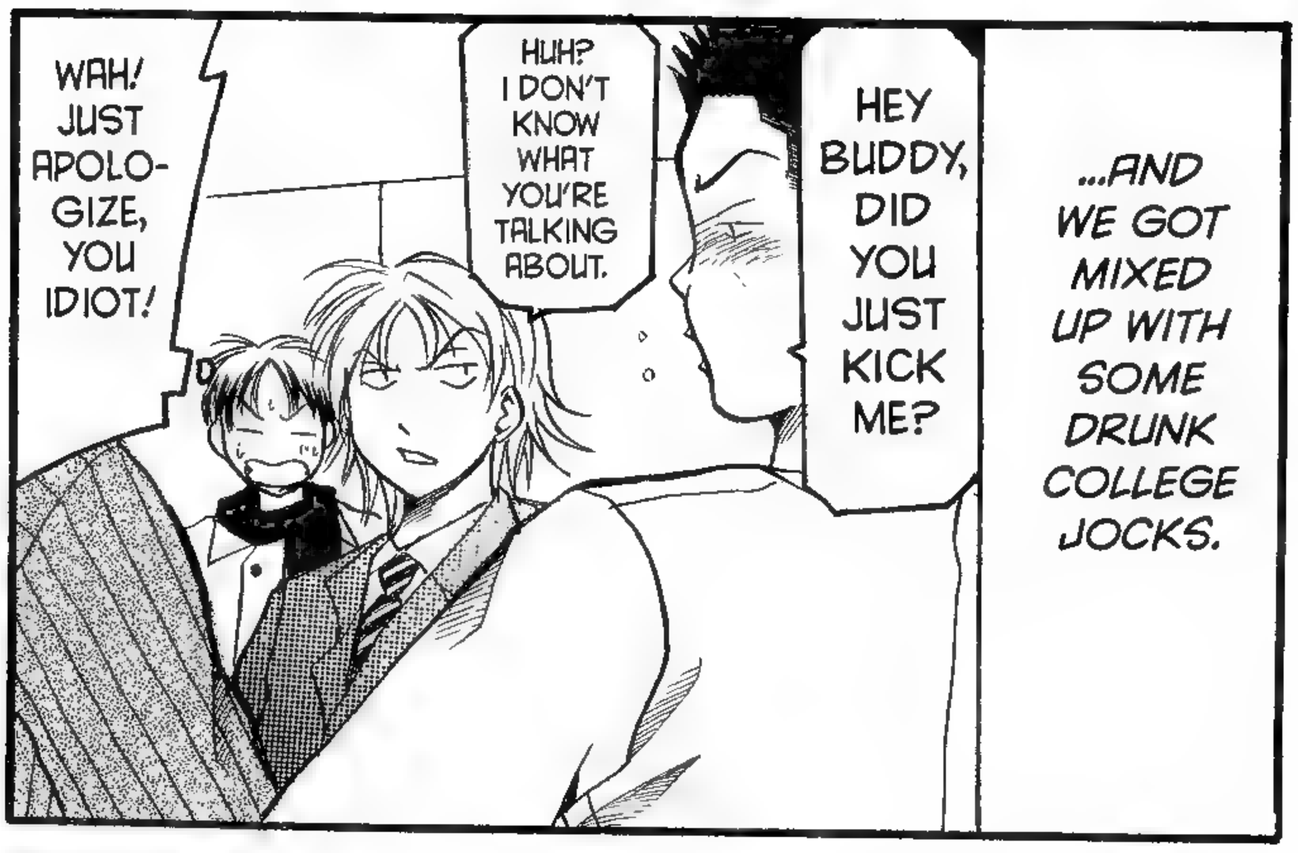
OUCH!

YOU IDIOT, YAMATO-KUN.

I HATE YOU!

MY LIFE IS STARTING TO CHANGE IN A BIG WAY...

AS ALWAYS, WE WENT OUT TO KARAOKE...
I KNOW HOW TO SING.
HE DRAGGED ME OUT.
ON HIS WAY HOME FROM WORK.
YOU'VE GOTTA LEARN HOW TO SING, SEO-SAN.
EVERY TIME I GO OUT WITH YASUNOBU-KUN WE END UP GETTING IN SOME KIND OF TROUBLE.


WAH! JUST APOLO-GIZE, YOU IDIOT!
HUH? I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
HEY BUDDY, DID YOU JUST KICK ME?
...AND WE GOT MIXED UP WITH SOME DRUNK COLLEGE JOCKS.

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER TWO
THE TROUBLEMAKER

ALL RIGHT! GOOD LUCK OUT THERE, MIHO-CHAN.

OKAY, YAMATO-KUN, I'M LEAVING!

HA, HA... OKAY.

DON'T FOR-GET! YOU PROM-ISED!

START-ING TO-MORROW, WE'LL WALK TO SCHOOL TOGETH-ER, OKAY.

ズリ FLAP ズリ FLAP

...SO, TOMORROW IS THE FIRST DAY OF HIGH SCHOOL.

I'M SO NERVOUS.

A WHOLE SCHOOL FULL OF COMPLETE STRANGERS.

THE ONLY PERSON I'LL KNOW THERE... IS HER.

Suzuka

#2 Hattori

THAT WAS DELICIOUS.

SHE WENT TO TRACK PRACTICE HOURS AGO.

HEY, WHERE IS ASAHINA?

GEEZ, YAMATO-KUN...

IT'S SUCH A NICE DAY, WHY DON'T YOU TRY GOING OUTSIDE FOR ONCE?

CLACK

カチャ

CLAK

HERE, GORO-CHAN.

AH... TIME TO CLEAN THE BATHS.

ガタ

THWUMP

IF YOU'VE GOT SO MUCH FREE TIME, WHY DON'T YOU JOIN A CLUB OR SOMETHING?

YOU COULD LEARN A FEW THINGS BY WATCHING SUZUKA-CHAN.

カン

CLOP

CLOP

MAN... SOME-TIMES AYANO-SAN SOUNDS JUST LIKE MY MOM.

バタ

SLAM

SIGH.

301

AKIZUKI

カチャ

CLICK

THEY'RE DEFINITELY SISTERS.

HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME HANGING OUT IN YOUR ROOM.

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

HEY!

LONG TIME NO SEE!

WH-WHO ARE YOU?

HUH?

IT'S ME, HATTORI-KUN!

COME ON, YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME?

HUH? WELL...IT WAS UNLOCKED. YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL.

HATTORI...? YASUNOBU HATTORI?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY ROOM?

STOP BEING SUCH A LITTLE BITCH. WE'RE BEST FRIENDS, AREN'T WE?

CRUNCH

HEY, YOU'RE EATING MY POTATO CHIPS?

OH, I SEE, IT WAS UNLOCKED, SO YOU THOUGHT YOU'D JUST WALK RIGHT IN?

WHAT'RE YOU, A BURGLAR?

HMMPH... I COULDN'T FIND A SINGLE PORNO MAG IN THIS ROOM.

POTATO CHIPS CONSOMME FLAVOR

HE'S A TOTAL PERVERT.

BEST FRIENDS?

THAT'S YASUNOBU HATTORI (AGE 15). HE WAS BORN AND RAISED RIGHT HERE IN TOKYO.

I MET HIM TEN YEARS AGO.

YEAH, RIGHT.

YEAH, THAT'S BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE ANY!

HUH?

WHAT'S WRONG? ARE YOU LOST?

MOMMY

UNH... SNIFF

IT WAS MY FIRST TIME VISITING AUNT AYANO-SAN, AND I GOT LOST.

YOU'VE GOT SNOT ALL OVER YOUR NOSE!

HA, HA, HA, HA! YOUR FACE IS ALL DIRTY!

YEAH.

OH, SO YOUR AUNT IS THE LADY WHO RUNS THE BATHS.

AT FIRST, HE SEEMED LIKE A REALLY NICE GUY.

WH- WHO ARE YOU?

HUH?

IT WAS ALL DOWN-HILL FROM THERE.

WELL, THEN... I KNOW JUST HOW YOU CAN REPAY ME.

GRIN

JUST STOP CRYING! HERE, HAVE A TISSUE.

NOT AGAIN...

HOW NICE, YAMATO-KUN... YOU MADE A LITTLE FRIEND.

FROM THAT DAY ON, EVERY TIME I CAME TO VISIT...

YAMATO-KUN, LET'S GO PLAY.

HE MADE ME PAY HIM BACK BY TAKING HIM TO PARTS OF THE BATHS WHERE NO ONE WAS SUPPOSED TO GO.

YOU'RE GONNA TAKE ME TO THE SECRET SPOT AGAIN, RIGHT? HEH, HEH, HEH.

カポーン

SPLASH

HUH?

ALL RIGHT! THIS YEAR WE'RE GONNA DO THINGS A LITTLE DIFFERENTLY.

OKAY, YASUNOBU-KUN... ISN'T THAT ENOUGH?

ゴゥーン

THUNK

THUNK

GOD, I LOVE THIS BOILER ROOM!

WHOA! WHAT A VIEW!

HELP ME, PLEASE! YAMATO-KUN IS PICKING ON ME!

HUH?

WH-WHAT THE—!

HUH?

KYAA!

FWAP

WAH!

I TOLD HIM THAT WE WEREN'T SUP-POSED TO PEEK AT YOU GUYS...

...BUT ALL HE DID WAS HIT ME, AND TELL ME TO SHUT UP.

HEH, HEH, HEH.

EVEN AT THAT AGE, HE WAS A NATURAL WHEN IT CAME TO GETTING ATTENTION FROM GIRLS.

HOW COULD YOU, YAMATO-KUN?

NO, IT WASN'T LIKE THAT, AYANO-SAN!

AND I WAS ALWAYS THE ONE WHO GOT IN TROUBLE.

WHAT?

HOW DARE YOU DO THAT TO HIM!

AWW... YOU POOR THING.

"RUB

"RUB

WAH!

SHUT UP.

YOU STILL DON'T HAVE A GIRLFRIEND, DO YOU? MAN, YOU'RE SUCH AN OTAKU.

MAGAZINE

MANGA

I RAN INTO MIHO-CHAN OVER THERE...

...AND SHE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT IT.

WE'RE EVEN IN THE SAME CLASS.

CRUNCH

NOW THAT WE'RE IN THE SAME SCHOOL, WE CAN HANG OUT ALL THE TIME, JUST LIKE WE USED TO IN THE OLD DAYS.

RUSTLE

OH, GREAT... SO YOU'RE EVEN GOING AFTER MIHO-CHAN.

HEY, DON'T WIPE YOUR HANDS ON THE CARPET!

SHUT UP! WHAT WOULD I WANT WITH A LITTLE BRAT LIKE HER?

FOR ME TO TAKE NOTICE, A GIRL HAS TO BE SUPER SEXY.

LIKE YOUR WIDOWED AUNT, AYANO-SAN... SHE'S NOT BAD.

WH-WHAT?

HUH?

302

SUZUKA ASAHINA

HEY, STOP IT! I'M NOT READY TO GO HOME YET!

ピンポーン SHOVE

ピンポーン SHOVE

I DON'T WANNA HEAR IT! JUST GET OUT!

HUH?

HEY, HEY, WHAT ABOUT THIS GIRL NEXT DOOR... SUZUKA-CHAN...

IS SHE HOT?

I CAN'T TELL HIM SHE'S GOING TO OUR SCHOOL TOO. THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT HE MIGHT DO.

ASAHINA MIGHT BE A LITTLE HARD TO DEAL WITH, BUT SHE'S DEFINITELY CUTE.

WELL, IS SHE?

I LIKE THE SOUND OF HER NAME.

WHA...

WHAT'S THIS?

I'LL LET YOU SEE SOMETHING REALLY COOL, BRO.

HEY, IF YOU INTRODUCE ME TO SUZUKA-CHAN...

バカッ

BLIP

THERE'S NO WAY I'M INTRO-DUCING HIM TO HER!

OH YEAH, ASAHINA?

IT'S A PHOTO GALLERY OF PANTY SHOTS OF ALL THE GIRLFRIENDS I'VE HAD. IT'S MY PRIDE AND JOY.

SAHINA

WHAT? SERIOUSLY?

SHE'S IN HER FIFTIES.

ALL THE GIRLFRIENDS YOU'VE HAD? YOU MUST GO THROUGH THEM PRETTY QUICKLY.

R606i

SHE'S ALSO FAT, UGLY, AND REALLY MEAN. SHE'S AN OLD HAG.

THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT IS. MEN AREN'T MEANT TO BE WITH JUST ONE GIRL.

I NEED A HAREM.

WAH! ASAHINA!

HUH? THAT'S HER?

WELL, EXCUSE ME...

W- WAIT! I ONLY SAID THAT 'CAUSE-

I DON'T WANNA HEAR YOUR EXCUSES, JERK!

...FOR BEING A FAT, UGLY, OLD HAG!

I HATE YOU!

SLAM

SHE'S SO UNREASONABLE!

HMM...

HELLO... ASAHINA... THE SOY SAUCE.

SLAM

ASAHINA, COULD YOU PASS THE SOY SAUCE?

CLINK

ALL YOU TWO DO IS FIGHT.

THANKS.

SU-SUZUKA-SAN...

CLINK

LISTEN, I DIDN'T MEAN–

DON'T BLAME ME. I'M JUST A FAT, UGLY, OLD HAG!

CHOMP

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

CHOMP

HMMPH.

YEAH, HE STOPPED BY TO SAY HELLO.

OH, DID YOU SEE HIM?

THAT REMINDS ME, YAMATO-KUN...

DID YOU HANG OUT WITH YASUNOBU HATTORI-KUN TODAY?

HMMPH

HE'S SUCH A CUTE KID. I REALLY LIKE YASUNOBU-KUN.

OH, THANKS.

HERE'S YOUR TEA, SUZUKA-CHAN.

YOU ALWAYS SAY THAT.

CHOMP

CHOMP

HE'S A TOTAL PERVERT.

I GUESS HE'S NOTHING LIKE YOU, YAMATO-KUN.

WOW.

BUT WE WERE IN THE SAME JUNIOR HIGH...

I KNOW PLENTY.

NOT A-GAIN.

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ME!

HE WAS SO POPULAR, HE HAD HIS OWN FAN CLUB.

IF YOU WEREN'T SUCH A SLOB, YOU'D PROBABLY BE JUST AS POPULAR AS HE IS.

OH, NO... I HOPE HATTORI-SAN ISN'T A BAD INFLUENCE ON YOU, YAMATO-KUN.

HEY, STOP TEASING HER!

クスクス

HEE...

HEE

HUH? BI-ASED?

I THINK YOU MIGHT BE JUST A WEE BIT BIASED, MIHO-CHAN.

...WHAT ASAHINA WOULD THINK OF YASUNOBU.

I WON-DER...

...!

WOULD SHE FALL FOR HIM LIKE ALL THE REST?

WHAT?

LOOK, A LUCKY TEA STEM!

AH, YAMATO-KUN YOU DIDN'T EAT YOUR ONIONS!

NO WAY.

UH... NOTHING! THANKS FOR DINNER.

YOU'RE LATE.

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

C - G
2 3

HAM A

CLICK

THERE'S NO WAY SHE'D FALL FOR A PLAYBOY LIKE HIM.

MEN'S

YOU-
YOU
LITTLE-

GRR

WERE YOU TRYING TO COVER SOMETHING UP?

RUSTLE

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID SUZUKA-CHAN WAS A FAT, UGLY, FIFTY-YEAR-OLD HAG.

I WASN'T...

N-
NO.

AH! MY COCONUT COOKIES!

I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING HOME!

YOU LIAR!

SHUT UP! YOU'RE THE LIAR!

HMMPH!

.....

IS THAT RIGHT?

WELL, THEN... MAYBE I'LL TRY TO PICK UP SUZUKA-CHAN.

WOO WOO

THERE'S NO WAY ASAHINA WOULD FALL FOR YOU.

OH, REALLY?

SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE GOT A VISITOR.

HUH?

ピンポーン DING DONG

ピンポーン DING DONG

ROGER.

LISTEN, KEEP IT DOWN, OKAY?

GUYS AREN'T EVEN SUPPOSED TO BE ALLOWED IN HERE.

ピンポーン DING DONG

YEAH, RIGHT.

MAYBE IT'S SUZUKA-CHAN.

YES?

EVEN AYANO-SAN WOULDN'T LET ME GET AWAY WITH HAVING HIM OVER AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT.

HELLO! IT'S US, YOUR FAVORITE ESCORTS!

ふぅ…

BLEAH.

FWAP

WHAT? YOU CALLED AN ESCORT SERVICE?

PHEW.

O-OH, IT'S YOU... YUUKA-SAN.

CLOP

CLOP

NO.

THANK GOD, I DIDN'T GO HOME.

OH, I GET IT. YOU WERE TRYING TO GET ME TO LEAVE, SO YOU COULD HAVE THOSE ESCORTS ALL TO YOURSELF, WEREN'T YOU?

YOU'RE TOTALLY SMASHED, MEGUMI-SAN.

FUU.

SHOW ME YOUR BOOBS, SHOW ME YOUR BOOBS... THAT'S ALL MEN EVER THINK ABOUT. I CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE.

OH, MY GOD... I'VE DIED AND GONE TO HEAVEN!

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE, A BAR?

WE COULDN'T FIND ANY DECENT GUYS ANY-WHERE, SO...

スッ

SHWIP

WE THOUGHT WE'D COME OVER AND HANG OUT HERE.

スッ

SHWIP

WH-WHAT?

GLARE

.....

WAH! NO, STOP!

FWIP

IF YOU WANT TO SEE THEM SO BADLY, THEN WHY DON'T YOU SAY SOMETHING, GOD DAMN IT! STOP BEATING AROUND THE BUSH!

HUH?

WOW, THOSE ARE REALLY COOL GLASSES. ARE THEY GUCCI?

THAT'S THE FIRST COMPLI-MENT...

...I'VE EVER GOTTEN THAT WASN'T ABOUT MY BOOBS.

WOW!

FWUMP

NOTHING BEATS THE REAL THING!

FWIP

I BROUGHT MY GUCCIS TOO.

LOOK.

HUH?

WHAT?

DRIP

WOW! YOU REALLY KNOW YOUR STUFF.

HEY! IS THAT DOM PERIGNON?

IN A WAY, YOU'VE GOT TO RESPECT THE MAN'S TALENT.

HEY, YAMATO! GET ME A CUP.

YOU'RE SUCH A BAD HOST.

GO AHEAD. SOMEONE GAVE IT TO ME ANYWAY.

STROKE なで

STROKE なで

OH, MAN... I WISH I COULD TRY SOME.

SUSHI

WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO? YUUKA-SAN SAID SHE WANTED SOME PEANUTS.

YO-ZA

YO-INK

CHECK HER OUT. SHE'S A 70.

THAT ONE'S A 73.

SO?

WHY'D YOU HAVE TO DRAG ME OUT SHOPPING?

HOW CAN YOU BE SUCH A KISS ASS?

I KNOW YOU WANNA BE POPULAR, BUT...

YANASE

YOU'RE SUCH A PUSH-OVER.

YOU'RE JUST LAZY.

SUZURAN BOULE

YEAH...

FIRST, YOU COMPLIMENT MEGUMI-SAN'S GLASSES, THEN THE CHAMPAGNE. I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU PULL IT OFF.

A KISS ASS?

COMICS STORE

DLDV

WHAT-EVER.

BESIDES, HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF A GIRL WHO HATES COMPLIMENTS?

YOU IDIOT! IT'S NOT LIKE I WOULD HAVE SAID THAT IF IT WASN'T TRUE.

IF I DID, MY REPUTATION WOULD BE RUINED.

WHAT?

SHOCK

HEY, IT'S SUZUKA-CHAN!

HMM...I WONDER IF...

D

ASAHINA LIKES COMPLIMENTS TOO.

LOOK, ISN'T THAT SUZUKA-CHAN?

AH... YOU'RE RIGHT. WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE?

THEY WERE STILL OPEN, SO I WENT TO PICK IT UP.

I JUST GOT A CALL FROM THIS STORE SAYING THAT THE MICROWAVE I ORDERED CAME IN.

WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST GET IT DELIVERED?

PICK IT UP?

WHAT'S THAT?

HEY, SUZUKA-CHAN. WHAT'RE YOU DOING OUT SO LATE?

YAMA-TO-KUN.

I ONLY BOUGHT IT BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU SAID, YAMATO-KUN.

YOU KNOW...

TODAY ONLY

SUPER SALE

YOU'RE SUCH A CHEAP-SKATE.

NO WAY. THAT COSTS MONEY.

BESIDES, I CAN CARRY IT MYSELF.

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID I SHOULD DO MY OWN COOKING!

IT MAKES STEAMING SIMPLE

HUH? WHAT DID I SAY?

YOU IDIOT.

BUT WHY A MICRO-WAVE? I MEAN, WHAT CAN YOU COOK WITH THAT?

I DIDN'T WANT TO CAUSE TOO MUCH TROUBLE FOR AYANO-SAN, SO...

YOU ARE SO CLUELESS.

I FIGURED I COULD AT LEAST COOK FOR MYSELF ON WEEKENDS.

IF YOU PRE-COOK A POTATO IN THE MICROWAVE, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BOIL IT FOR AS LONG.

.....

YOU CAN SAVE A LOT OF MONEY ON YOUR GAS BILL.

WH- WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

IF SHE JUST WANTED TO WARM STUFF UP, SHE COULD DO THAT AT A CONVENIENCE STORE.

HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD OF MICROWAVE COOKING?

I'M HATTORI!

WOW, I'M IMPRESSED.

UM...

!

!

OH, YOU CAN STEAM STUFF WITH THIS ONE, CAN'T YOU? I SAW IT ON THE COMMERCIAL.

YEAH, I'M GONNA MAKE ALL KINDS OF STUFF.

SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE'S HAVING WAY MORE FUN THAN WHEN SHE'S TALKING TO ME.

WH- WHAT'S WITH ASAHINA?

HUH?

WAIT A SECOND. I THOUGHT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BUY PEANUTS.

OH, I COULDN'T LET YOU DO THAT.

THAT MUST BE HEAVY. WANT ME TO CARRY IT BACK TO YOUR APART-MENT?

HUH?

WHY DON'T YOU TAKE CARE OF THAT?

I'M GOING TO CARRY THIS FOR SUZUKA-CHAN.

HE'S ALREADY MAKING HIS MOVE.

.....

WELL THEN...

I KNEW IT!

THREE'S A CROWD.

COME ON, YAMATO...

MAYBE I'LL TRY TO PICK UP ON SUZUKA-CHAN.

NO!

I'LL CARRY ASAHINA'S STUFF FOR HER!

YAMATO-KUN?

HUH?

YOU ARE NOT!

I'M BEING CARE-FUL!

YOU GO BUY THE PEANUTS!

COME ON, ASAHINA!

YANK

HUH?

HEY, CAREFUL WITH THAT! YOU'RE GONNA BREAK IT!

BESIDES, HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF A GIRL WHO HATES COMPLIMENTS?

DAMN, DAMN! I'M SO PISSED.

コツ CLOP

コツ CLOP

HEY... WHAT'RE YOU SO MAD ABOUT?

NO-THING!

WHAT?

H-HEY, ASAHINA!

HMM... COMPLIMENTS SOUNDS EASY ENOUGH.

.....

HUH?

I REALLY LIKE...

THE SHAPE OF YOUR EARS!

I MEAN... I WAS JUST THINKING... YOU'VE GOT REALLY NICE EARS...

N-NO-THING...

THUNK

I TRY TO SAY SOMETHING NICE ABOUT YOU AND YOU STILL ACT ALL GRUMPY.

YASUNOBU! YOU NO GOOD LIAR!

WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU BABBLING ABOUT?

WELL, WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM A FAT, UGLY, OLD HAG LIKE ME?

I'M MEAN? YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID ALL THAT STUFF BEHIND MY BACK.

LOOK, I SAID I WAS SORRY!

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE STILL HOLDING THAT AGAINST ME. YOU'RE SO MEAN.

SHE WAS ACTING LIKE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON WHEN SHE WAS TALKING TO YASUNOBU.

DAMN, SHE PISSES ME OFF!

HMMPH!

WHAT?

YOU LOOK SO COOL WHEN YOU'RE DOING THE HIGH JUMP, BUT AS SOON AS YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH IT'S A DIFFERENT STORY.

I GUESS MY FIRST IMPRESSION OF HER WAS COMPLETELY WRONG.

THAT'S RIGHT... THE FIRST TIME I SAW YOU I WAS REALLY IMPRESSED, BUT NOW...

ME?

COOL?

EVERY TIME SHE LOOKS AT ME SHE STARTS COMPLAINING ABOUT SOMETHING.

TH-
THANKS...

NO
ONE'S
EVER
SAID
THAT TO
ME
BEFORE.

HUH?

THUMP

THUMP

WHAT? NO WAY!

EVEN I CAN TELL WHEN SOMEONE'S GOT TALENT.

MAYBE I JUST LOOKED IMPRESSIVE TO YOU BECAUSE YOU'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE DO THE HIGH JUMP.

B-BUT...

ARE YOU BEING SERIOUS?

I CAN'T TELL. ALL YOU EVER DO IS JOKE AROUND!

WOW, LOOK AT THAT CUTE EXPRESSION SHE MAKES WHEN SHE TALKS TO YAMATO.

W-

WELL I...

SHE LOOKS WAY HAPPIER THAN WHEN SHE WAS TALKING TO ME.

HOW DE-PRESS-ING.

...DRINKS WITH THOSE TWO BABES...

CLOP CLOP CLOP

I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO SET-TLE FOR...

WELL, WHAT-EVER...

WELL... SHALL WE?

YEAH.

AT LEAST YAMATO-KUN IS FINALLY GOING AFTER A GIRL.

SUZUKA ASAHINA...

...THE PERFECT GIRL WHO CAN'T STAND CLUELESS GUYS LIKE ME.

WHEN THE TOPIC TURNS TO TRACK, SHE SUDDENLY FILLS WITH PASSION AND EXCITEMENT.

SHE'S ALWAYS GRUMPY AND MEAN, BUT...

N-NOTHING!

WHAT?

IT'S TIMES LIKE THAT WHEN I REALIZE JUST HOW CUTE ASAHINA REALLY IS.

I WOULDN'T BE CAUGHT DEAD BUYING ONE OF THOSE!

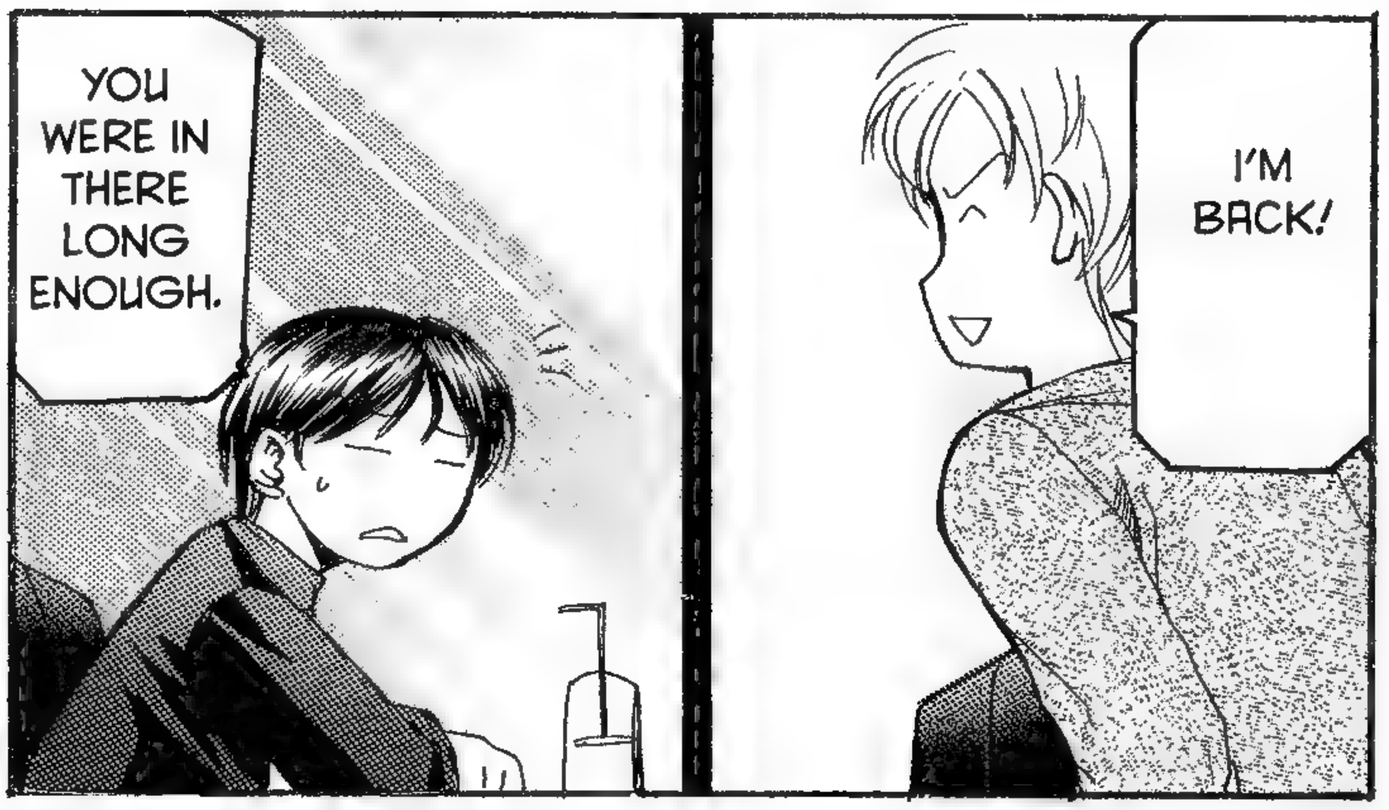
I WANT A RIKA-CHAN DOLL

NOW GO BUY ME A RIKA-CHAN DOLL!

THERE'S NO WAY I COULD EVER SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO HER.

I'M NO YASUNOBU...

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER THREE WHENEVER, WHEREVER...



AH, YAMATO-KUN! DO YOU HAVE YOUR HANDKER-CHIEF?

BUTTON UP YOUR COAT!

ASAHIYU BATHS

BYE, AYANO-SAN. I'M OFF!

SUZUKA-CHAN IS LEAVING!

HURRY UP, YAMATO-KUN!

SO, I'M FINALLY STARTING HIGH SCHOOL!

WAH! HANG ON, ASAHINA!

I'M HOPING MY LIFE WILL CHANGE IF I MAKE A FRESH START.

I'VE GOT A FEELING...

Suzuka

...SOMETHING GOOD IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN!

#3 Honoka

HMM... SO YOU'RE IN CLASS C TOO, YAMATO-KUN?

FRESHMEN WELCOME CEREMONY

NOT EX-ACT-LY.

WHY? DO YOU HAVE A PROB-LEM WITH THAT?

ME TOO, SUZUKA-CHAN! ME TOO!

SHE DIDN'T EVEN WAIT FOR ME THIS MORNING.

DOES SHE HAVE TO BE SO MEAN?

NOT EX-ACT-LY?

SHE'S SO COLD... WHY CAN'T SHE JUST SAY, "THAT'S GREAT!" OR SOMETHING?

SO...

Attendance List

1. Yamato Akitsuki
2. Suzuka Asahina
3.
4.

HIS NAME IS YAMATO-AKITSUKI-KUN...

.....

SHOPPING?

HUH?

WHY ME?

YEAH, I'M GONNA GET OUT OF PRACTICE EARLY TODAY. WILL YOU COME WITH ME?

...AND THE GIRL WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO COME WTH ME WAS SICK TODAY.

MY SENPAI ASKED ME TO BUY A CASE OF ENERGY DRINKS...

N-NO... NOT REALLY...

DO YOU HAVE PLANS?

UH... OKAY, WHATEVER. SOUNDS LIKE A PAIN IN THE BUTT, BUT I'LL TAG ALONG.

COOL. SO WAIT FOR ME AFTER SCHOOL, OKAY?

UH... BYE.

SEE YOU LATER.

ASAHINA-SAN!

YOU'RE IN CLASS C, RIGHT? WE'RE NEIGHBORS.

I'M PRETTY SURE IT STARTS AT ONE.

CHATTER

ワイ

CHATTER

ワイ

HEY, WHAT TIME DOES PRACTICE START TODAY?

WERE WE SUPPOSED TO BRING ANY-THING?

AH...

WOW, SO... ASAHINA HAS ALREADY MADE FRIENDS...

THOSE MUST BE HER FRIENDS FROM THE TRACK CLUB...

OH MY GOD, THAT'S SO CUTE! WHERE'D YOU GET IT?

YEAH DUDE, I SAW IT!

ARE YOU SERIOUS?

ALL ALONE

ASAHINA ISN'T HERE YET.

THEY DON'T REALLY WANT TO. THEY JUST SAY THAT.

YEAH, I KNOW.

WHY ARE GIRLS ALWAYS TRYING TO BREAK UP?

YASUNOBU IS TALKING TO ALL HIS OLD FRIENDS, AND...

I FEEL SO ISOLATED. EVERY-BODY ELSE KNOWS ONE ANOTHER.

CHATTER

KYA, HA, HA.

CHATTER

BASKET-BALL? I DON'T EVEN KNOW THE RULES!

SO WHAT? LET'S JOIN THE CLUB, MAN.

IT'S JUST ME... ALL BY MYSELF.

SO THIS IS THE CRUEL TRUTH.

AH... AKTISUKI-KUN...

HUH?

WH-WHO ARE YOU?

I GUESS... WE'RE IN THE SAME CLASS.

UH... UM...

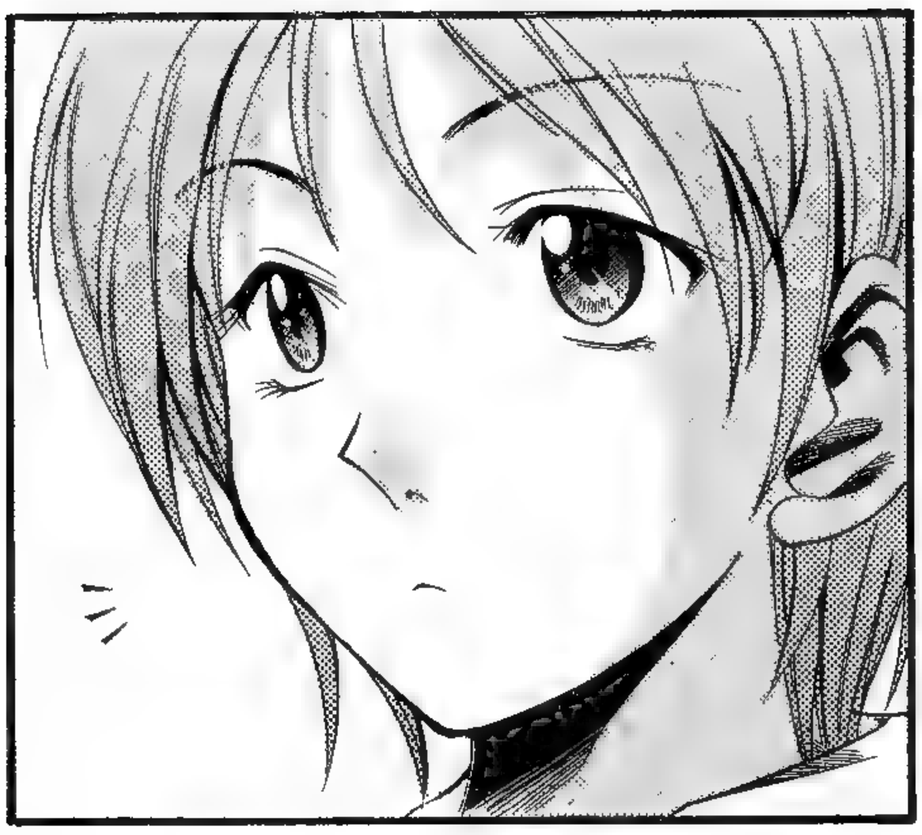
W-WHAT?

YOU MEAN... YOU DON'T REMEMBER? THAT... SECRET WE HAD...

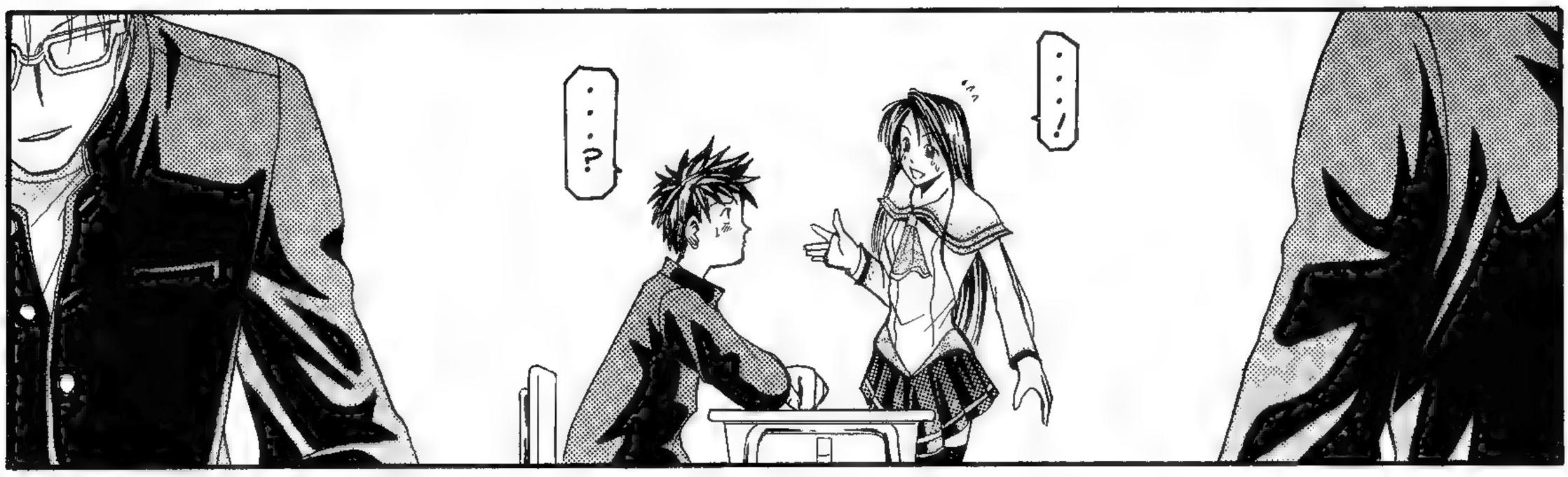
SA-KUR-AI?

OH, WAIT... UH, DIDN'T I TELL YOU MY NAME?

I'M HONOKA SAKURAI!



キョロ
YOINK
キョロ
YOINK
OH YEAH, I FORGOT TO TELL YAMATO-KUN WHERE TO MEET ME.
WHERE'D HE GO?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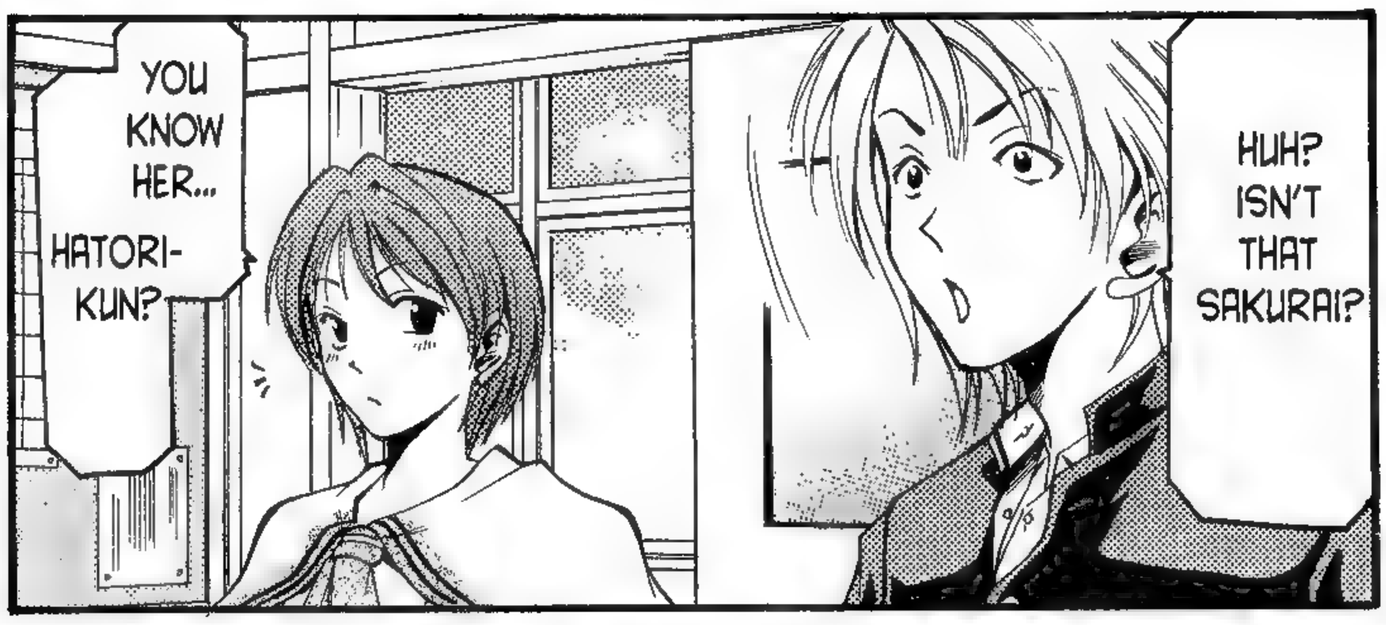
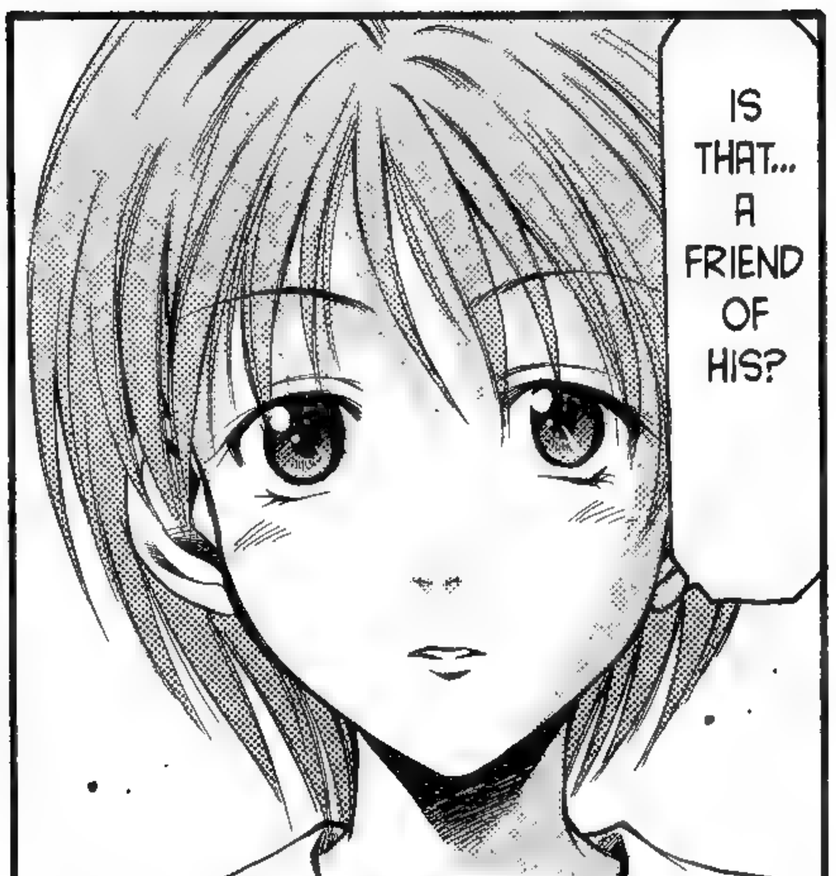

YOU KNOW HER... HATORI-KUN?
HUH? ISN'T THAT SAKURAI?


IS THAT... A FRIEND OF HIS?

...!
LOOKS LIKE YAMATO IS GETTING SOME ACTION!
YEAH, WE WENT TO THE SAME JUNIOR HIGH. BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN HER TALK TO A GUY LIKE THAT.

SO I GUESS YOU AND I BETTER DO SOMETHING TOO.

HEY, ARE YOU LIS-TEN-ING?

WE'RE THE ONLY FRIENDS YAMATO HAS HERE.

HE'S SUCH A NEWBIE.

ARE YOU SURE THEY'RE NOT JUST FRIENDS?

I WAS A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT YAMATO 'CAUSE HE'S SO BAD WITH CHICKS, BUT HE'S ACTUALLY DOING OKAY.

THEY'RE PROBABLY MAKING PLANS FOR AFTER SCHOOL.

AH...THE TEACHER'S HERE.

S-SEE YOU LATER!

YEAH... OKAY.

十一

SLIDE

ALL RIGHT, EVERY-BODY! TAKE A SEAT!

BONK

OH! I'M SORRY.

AH!

HONOKA...

HONOKA SAKURAI...

DONG

DING

HEY, LET'S GO TO KARA-OKE.

SEE YA.

WHO THE HECK IS SHE? I CAN'T REMEMBER.

カリ CLANK

HEY, ASAHINA... WHERE SHOULD I MEET YOU?

WELL, I GUESS I'LL JUST WAIT FOR ASAHINA.

FWIP

S-SORRY, HANG ON A SECOND...

HONOKA-CHAN.

AH... UM... AKITSUKI-KUN...

HUH?

A-ASAHINA... WAIT! I NEED TO ASK YOU--

I KNOW.

FORGET IT. I'LL GO BY MYSELF.

H-HUH?

LOOK, I'M IN A HURRY SO...

WHAT THE HECK IS HER PROBLEM?

IS SHE NUTS?

WAIT!

コツ CLOP

コツ CLOP

HEY, ASAHINA!

UH... AKITSUKI-KUN... IS THAT GIRL YOUR...

HUH?

OH, SHE'S A FRIEND OF MINE.

ISN'T SHE CRAZY?

PHEW

A FRIEND?

IT WAS ABOUT FIVE YEARS AGO...

.....

UH...SO, HAVE WE MET SOMEWHERE BEFORE, HONOKA-CHAN?

I REALLY CAN'T REMEMBER.

YOU MEAN YOUR FAMILY RUNS THAT SHRINE?

YOUR FAMILY'S SHRINE?

WE MET AT MY FAMILY'S SHRINE.

YOU KNOW... SHUSSE INARI SHRINE.

YEAH... THE DAY WE MET, I WAS PLAYING WITH THE BELL THAT HANGS OVER THE SHRINE, AND IT BROKE.

HEY! YOU BROKE THE BELL!

ガーン SHOCK

OH, NO... DADDY'S GONNA KILL ME...

SNIFF

ぐすっ...

WHAT'D YOU DO THAT FOR?

ガラン DING DONG

ガーン DING DONG

CHOMP

CHOMP

NOW HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO PRAY?

UH... I'M SORRY.

I WAS SURE THAT YOU WERE GONNA TELL ON ME.

BUT...

DON'T CRY. I'LL FIX IT.

ガラン DING

WHAT? NO WAY, IT'S RUINED.

DON'T WORRY. I'M REALLY GOOD WITH THIS KIND OF STUFF.

WOW... IT'S FIXED.

YOUR DAD WILL NEVER KNOW!

JUST BETWEEN...

...ME AND YOU...

LISTEN... THIS IS GONNA BE OUR LITTLE SECRET. JUST BETWEEN ME AND YOU, OKAY?

OKAY.

UH... UM...

I'M SO GLAD YOU REMEMBERED.

TEE HEE

DON'T WORRY, I NEVER TOLD ANYBODY!

OH! WOW, SO THAT WAS YOU?

UH... OH, REALLY?

ACTUALLY, SOMETIMES I GO TO THAT SHRINE AND EAT CROQUETTES.

THE TRUTH IS, I SAW YOU EATING CROQUETTES AT THE SHRINE LOTS OF TIMES, BUT...

HUH?

WELL, NOT JUST CROQUETTES, I LIKE ANYTHING TASTY.

DO YOU LIKE CROQUETTES, AKITSUKI-KUN?

I WAS ALWAYS TOO EMBAR-RASSSED TO SAY ANYTHING.

R-
REALLY?

OH,
YEAH!
I'VE
BEEN
WANTING
TO GO
THERE!

DID YOU
HEAR
ABOUT
THE NEW
OKONO-
MIYAKI
PLACE
THAT
OPENED
NEAR
THE
STATION?

WELL...
UM...

WELL,
THEN...

カァ
BLUSH

UM...

MAYBE...
WE
COULD...

...GO
THERE
TODAY...

FORGET
IT...

I'LL
GO BY
MYSELF.

IF-IF-
IF YOU
CAN'T,
THAT'S
OKAY!

UH...
TODAY?

SWIVEL

I
JUST
WANTED
TO
ASK!

IT'D
BE STUPID
OF ME
TO WAIT
FOR HER
AFTER
WHAT SHE
SAID.

SHE
REALLY
IS
NUTS.

SHWIP.

PHEW...

PRACTICE WENT LONGER THAN I THOUGHT.

DON'T FORGET. OKAY, ASAHINA? A CASE OF ENERGY DRINKS.

OKAY.

I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO MAKE TWO TRIPS.

A WHOLE CASE...

KA

DING

DONG

DING

THEY'RE PROBABLY MAKING PLANS FOR AFTER SCHOOL.

. . . . . .

HE REALLY IS CLUELESS.

IS THIS WHAT HE CALLS "TAGGING ALONG"?

I WISH YAMATO-KUN WERE HERE.

AH...

AH-CHOO!

YOU KEPT ME WAITING LONG ENOUGH.

YA-YAMATO-KUN!

YOU WAITED FOR ME?

FOR FIVE HOURS?

THANKS A LOT.

WHAT WAS I SUP-POSED TO DO?

THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD CARRY A WHOLE CASE BY YOURSELF.

SORRY, HONOKA-CHAN. I PROMISED ASAHINA THAT I'D GO SHOPPING WITH HER.

I DON'T REALLY WANNA GO, BUT SHE CAN'T HANDLE IT BY HERSELF.

SIGH...

YAMATO AKITSUKI-KUN...

YOU ARE SUCH...

...AN IDIOT!

HE'S SO...

...SWEET AND SENSITIVE.

WHAT?

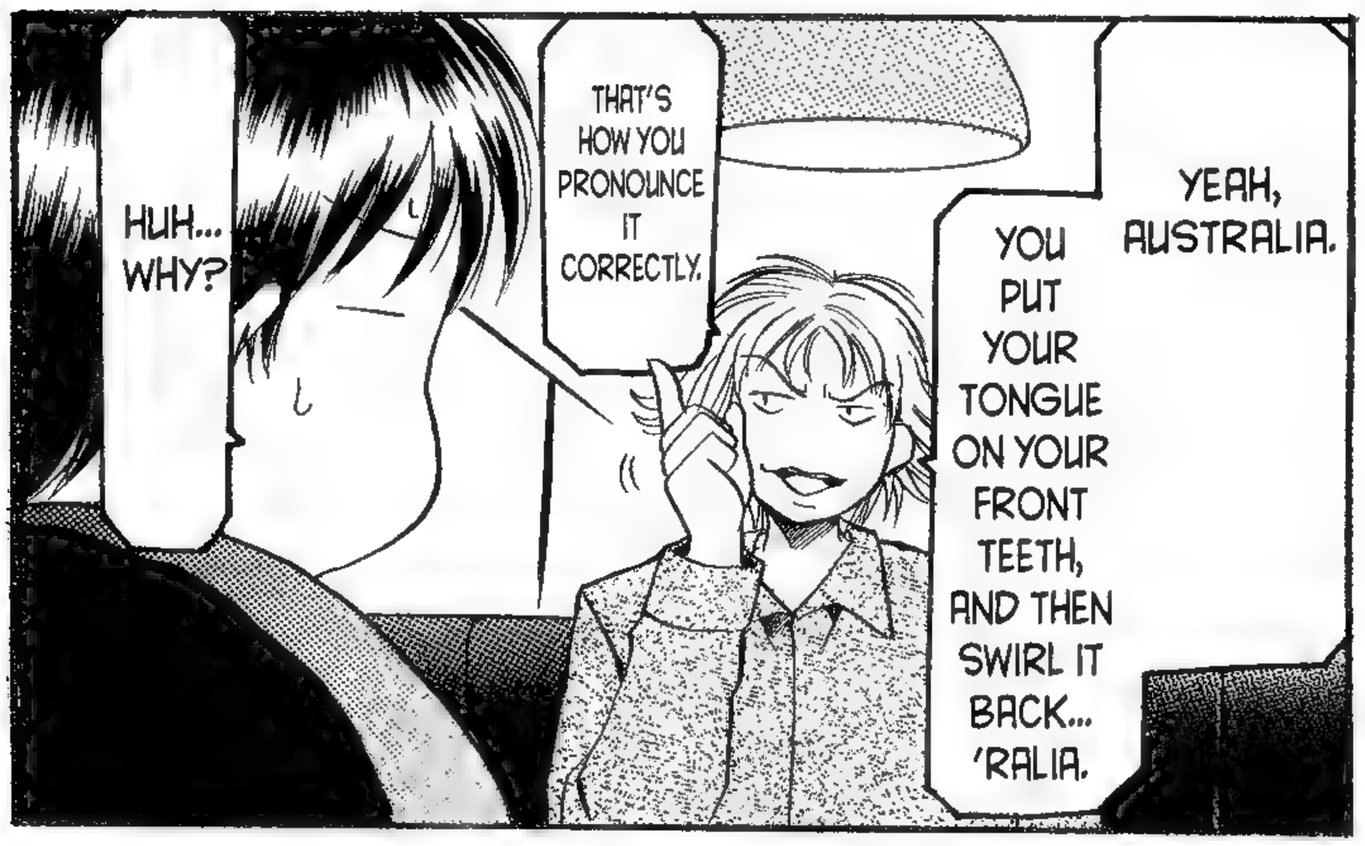
THAT'S CRAZY!

WHO IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD WAIT FIVE WHOLE HOURS?

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO KEPT ME WAITING!

I PRACTICALLY FROZE MY BUTT OFF, YOU KNOW?

HEY! ARE YOU LISTENING, ASAHINA!


HUH... WHY?
THAT'S HOW YOU PRONOUNCE IT CORRECTLY.
YEAH, AUSTRALIA.
YOU PUT YOUR TONGUE ON YOUR FRONT TEETH, AND THEN SWIRL IT BACK... 'RALIA.

THAT'S YOUR ONLY REASON?
CHICKS WOULD BE SO IMPRESSED.
DON'T YOU THINK IT'D BE COOL TO BE ABLE TO WATCH FOREIGN MOVIES WITHOUT SUBTITLES?

YOU'RE SUCH AN IDIOT!
"DO YOU UNDER-STAND?"*
THAT'S A PERFECTLY GOOD REASON.
TO BE HONEST, I WAS KIND OF IMPRESSED BY HIS SPONTANEITY.
*IN ENGLISH

HE'S ACTUALLY THERE RIGHT NOW.

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER FOUR

RALIA

SO, DON'T CALL ME AN IDIOT!

ゼー

HAHH

HEY! I CAUGHT A COLD WAITING FOR YOU OUT THERE!

ゼー

HAHH

WHAT?

ゲホッ

COUGH

AND STOP BREATHING ON ME!

I DIDN'T ASK YOU TO WAIT! STOP TRYING TO MAKE ME FEEL GUILTY!

.....

SETTLE DOWN AND TAKE YOUR MEDICINE, YAMATO-KUN!

ケホッ

COUGH

YEAH, I DON'T WANT YOU TO DIE, YAMATO-KUN!

ゴホッ

COUGH

YEAH, YOU DON'T WANT IT TO GET ANY WORSE, DO YOU?

WHY DON'T YOU GO TO SLEEP, YAMATO-KUN? I ALREADY CALLED THE SCHOOL FOR YOU.

HEY, WAIT!

I'M GOING TO SCHOOL! I DON'T WANT TO CATCH YOUR COLD RIGHT BEFORE THE BIG COMPETITION.

Suzuka

#4
The Visit

AKITSUKI IS OUT WITH A COLD.

ASAHINA.

HERE.

INOUE?

1-C

OKAY, LET'S TAKE ATTENDANCE.

I HOPE HE'S OKAY.

AKITSUKI-KUN... CAUGHT A COLD...

SCHOOL JUST STARTED AND THAT FOOL IS ALREADY SICK...

HEH, HEH. WHO CATCHES A COLD IN APRIL?

HEY, YOU! STOP WALKING!

I WANNA SEE YOU GUYS HUSTLE.

POCARI SWEAT

DONG

DING

NO.

THAT CASE MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY HEAVY.

I HAD NO IDEA THE GIRL WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO GO WITH YOU WAS SICK.

SORRY ABOUT YESTERDAY, ASAHINA.

THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD CARRY A WHOLE CASE BY YOURSELF.

A FRIEND OF MINE GAVE ME A HAND.

I COULD HAVE HANDLED IT BY MYSELF ANYWAY.

OH... REALLY?

REALLY? I GUESS EVERYTHING WORKED OUT THEN...

カチ〃 TIC TOC

...FEEL LIKE I'M GETTING WORSE AND WORSE.

ケホ〃 COUGH

ケホ〃 COUGH

I...

ケホ〃 COUGH

I...

ケホ〃 COUGH

カチ〃 TIC TOC

カチ〃 TIC TOC

MIHO SHOULD BE HOME BY AROUND FIVE.

SORRY, YAMATO-KUN, BUT I'LL BE BUSY TILL LATE TONIGHT.

...PROBABLY WON'T EVEN BOTHER COMING TO VISIT ME.

ケホ〃 COUGH

ASAHINA...

MIHO-CHAN AND AYANO-SAN WON'T BE HOME FOR A WHILE.

ケホ〃 COUGH

I MIGHT DIE RIGHT HERE, GORO-CHAN.

ゴホ〃 COUGH

ニャー MEOW

// FWUP

C-COULD THAT BE-

ASAHINA?

...!

MEOW

DING DONG

WHAS'SUP!

HOY

THUNK

YOU REALLY WANT ME TO GO HOME? I BROUGHT A GIRL.

PANT

ヒ"!

ヒ"!

PANT

GO HOME... YOU'RE MAKING ME EVEN WORSE.

H... HEY... 'SUP...

UM...

ミ キ THUMP

ミ キ THUMP

ARE-ARE YOU OKAY?

AKITSUKI-KUN...

WHAT'S WITH THAT PUNY, LITTLE VOICE? I WANNA HEAR IT AGAIN, LOUDER!

I-I WASN'T BEGGING.

301

NHK 3.5

AKITUSKI YA

SHE KEPT BEGGING ME TO TAKE HER HERE TO VISIT YOU.

HO-HONOKA-CHAN?

STOP IT!

WHILE I'M GONE, YOU CAN HAVE YOUR WAY WTIH HIM!

IT'S COOL. IT'S COOL.

I DON'T WANNA GET IN THE WAY, SO I'LL GO BUY SOME SODAS.

A-AKITSUKI-KUN!

TSS

UNNNGH

TSS

C-CODE

A-ARE YOU OKAY?

SORRY FOR COMING BY WHEN YOU'RE SICK.

TH-THAT'S OKAY...

ちら…

GLANCE

ASAHINA DIDN'T COME EVEN THOUGH SHE LIVES NEXT DOOR.

IT'S SO NICE OF YOU TO COME VISIT ME, HONOKA-CHAN.

COUGH

ゴホッ

S-SORRY, IT'S KIND OF A MESS.

I-I DON'T THINK IT'S MESSY AT ALL.

MEOW

SO THIS IS YOUR ROOM, HUH, AKITSUKI-KUN? OH, THERE'S A CAT!

YOU MEAN ASAHINA-SAN LIVES HERE TOO?

WHAT?

SO THAT'S WHY THEY'RE SO CLOSE.

OH, I GET IT...

OH, DIDN'T I TELL YOU?

NO... I DON'T HAVE MUCH OF AN APPETITE.

UH... UM... ARE YOU HUNGRY, AKITSUKI-KUN? WANT ME TO MAKE SOMETHING FOR YOU?

N-NO...

Y-
YEAH?

YEAH.
SO, JUST
RELAX
AND
LET ME
HANDLE
THIS.

YOU
KNOW
WHAT
THEY SAY,
STARVE
A FEVER,
FEED
A COLD?

THAT'S
NO
GOOD!

I'M
A GREAT
COOK!
I'LL MAKE
SOMETHING
REALLY
TASTY
FOR
YOU!

BUT
WE
DON'T
HAVE
ANY
INGRE-
DIENTS.

DON'T
WORRY.
I LIVE
REALLY
CLOSE
BY. I'LL
BRING
SOME
STUFF
OVER!

*THAT'S
RIGHT...
I LIVE
PRETTY
CLOSE
TO HIM
TOO...*

CLICK

*I'VE
GOTTA
HANG IN
THERE IF I
WANNA
COMPETE
WITH
ASAHINA-
SAN...*

SHE MUST BE GOING TO VISIT AKITSUKI-KUN...

ASAHINA-SAN...

OH... UH... SAKURAI-SAN...

WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?

WELL, TELL HIM I SAID I HOPE HE FEELS BETTER.

I THOUGHT I'D COOK SOMETHING UP FOR AKITSUKI-KUN.

REALLY?

NO WAY. I DON'T WANNA CATCH HIS COLD.

BOINK

A-ASAHINA-SAN, YOU MEAN YOURE NOT GOING TO VISIT—

WHAT?

AH!

ゲホッ ゲホッ

COUGH

COUGH

I'D BETTER HURRY!

I'VE GOTTA GET STARTED!

UH... OH...

MAYBE THEY'RE REALLY NOT THAT CLOSE AFTER ALL...

THANKS A LOT!

WOW... THAT WAS DELICIOUS!

YEAH, EVERYTHING WAS GREAT.

UH... UM...

YOU'RE A PRETTY GOOD COOK. HONOKA-CHAN.

WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU GUYS EVEN DOING HERE?

THAT'S RIGHT.

IT'S NOT LIKE SKIPPING ONE MEAL IS GONNA KILL YOU.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, YAMATO.

HEY, HONOKA-CHAN... WHAT ABOUT MINE?

SORRY, BUT... THERE ISN'T ANY LEFT.

I'LL MAKE YOU FEEL ALL BETTER.

DON'T WORRY, YAMATO-KUN...

ゴソ ゴソ

RUSTLE RUSTLE

YEAH, IT IS. I HEARD YOU WERE SICK, SO...

I STOLE IT FROM THE SCIENCE LAB.

H-HEY!

THAT THING'S REAL!

"THWAP"

GWAH!

TIME FOR YOUR SHOT. ♡

HERE YOU GO.

SO JUST RELAX.

NO WAY!

FLIP FLOP

I MAY NOT LOOK IT, BUT I AM A MED STUDENT, YOU KNOW?

FLIP FLOP

SQUIRM-ING AROUND LIKE THAT...

...IS ONLY GONNA MAKE IT WORSE.

FLOP

OKAY!

SHUT UP! HOLD DOWN HIS LEGS, HATTORI!

FLIP

WAH! THAT'S PROBABLY SOME WEIRD EXPERIMENTAL FORMULA OR SOMETHING.

YOU'RE GONNA TURN ME INTO A MON-STER!

FLAP

YEAH, BUT WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? I MEAN, IT'S JUST FOR PERSONAL USE.

B-BUT, DON'T YOU NEED SOME KIND OF MEDICAL LICENSE TO DO THAT?

IT'S STILL WRONG

WAHHH!

GLOOP

THERE!

FWISH

!

HATTORI-SENPAI AND SAKURAI-SENPAI ARE VISITING YAMATO-KUN...OH, AND SAOTOME-SAN TOO.

THUNK

THUNK

IT'S AWFULLY NOISY UP THERE.

SAKURA-SAN SAID SHE'D MAKE SOMETHING FOR HIM.

FUU

I'M SURE HE'S FINE.

I WONDER WHAT YAMATO-KUN IS DOING FOR DINNER.

WOO

HOO

THERE IT IS! A HIT RIGHT DOWN THE CENTER!

I THINK GORO-CHAN'S HUNGRY, MOM.

SCRATCH

SCRATCH

OKAY, THEN...I GUESS I CAN PUT EVERY-THING AWAY.

DOWN, GORO-CHAN...

MEOW

I'M STARVING.

GRUMBLE

ぎゅるるる…

THEN FINALLY LEFT.

チッ TIC TOC

チッ TIC TOC

チッ… TIC TOC

...DIDN'T EVEN COME BY TO VISIT ME.

COUGH

I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT ASAHINA...

COUGH

HE SOUNDS A LOT WORSE THAN HE DID THIS MORNING.

COUGH

SLAM

COUGH

COUGH

COUGH

I CAUGHT A COLD WAITING FOR YOU OUT THERE!

HAHAP

IT'S NOT MY PROBLEM.

HMMPH!

AH!

BONK

HOW CAN YOU BE SO UNGRATEFUL, ASAHINA!

DAMN! I'M SO HUNGRY!

THIS SUCKS!

COUGH

COUGH

A-ASAHINA...

HOW'D YOU GET IN HERE?

YOU'RE SO LOUD!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? DON'T YOU REMEMBER THAT HOLE YOU MADE IN MY WALL?

HMMPH... SARCASTIC AS ALWAYS.

CAN'T YOU JUST REST QUIETLY?

HERE.

CLINK

コト

YEAH, WELL... YOU'D BETTER AT LEAST PAY FOR MY MEDICINE IF I GET IT.

COUGH

DON'T BLAME ME IF YOU CATCH MY COLD.

COUGH

I WAS BORED, SO I MADE IT FOR YOU.

WHAT'S THAT?

HUH?

FWOOSH

ALL RIGHT! THANK GOD!

IT'S TAMAGOZAKE. YOU KNOW, EGGS MIXED WITH SAKE. I MADE SOME HARD-BOILED EGGS TOO. I THOUGHT I'D LET YOU TRY SOME.

THANKS, ASAHINA!

GULP

I'M TOTALLY STARVING!

OF COURSE, YOU'RE PROBABLY NOT HUNGRY SINCE SAKURAI-SAN COOKED ALL THAT—

WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING SOONER?

Y-YOU ARE?

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO LET IT SIMMER TILL IT GETS ALL CREAMY. IT'S NOT THAT EASY.

WELL, ISN'T THAT WHAT TAMAGO-ZAKE IS SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE?

WHAT?

THE EGGS ARE ALL CLUMPED TOGETHER.

GROSS!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO FINISH IT.

...SORRY.

HUH?

DON'T WORRY!

ズー…

SLURP

I'M STARVING. I'LL FINISH IT NO MATTER WHAT!

YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO FIND ANYONE ELSE TO DRINK IT.

BESIDES ...IT'S SO NASTY.

YAMATO-KUN...

. . .

. . . . . .

EVEN YOU COULDN'T SCREW UP HARD-BOILED EGGS.

CHOMP

BUT NO MATTER HOW BAD A COOK YOU ARE...

YOU PUT EGGS IN THE MICROWAVE? WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?

WHAT? YOU MEAN, YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO?

NOT UNLESS YOU WANT THEM TO EXPLODE!

ASAHIYU BATHS

THAT'S RIGHT! ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PLOP THEM IN THE MICRO-WAVE...

KABOOM

WH-WHAT HAPPENED?

THUNK

SUZUKA'S FIRST HOMEMADE DINNER

SOUP: CLUMPY, CLUMPY TAMAGOZAKE

THE MAIN COURSE: EXPLODING EGG BOMBS

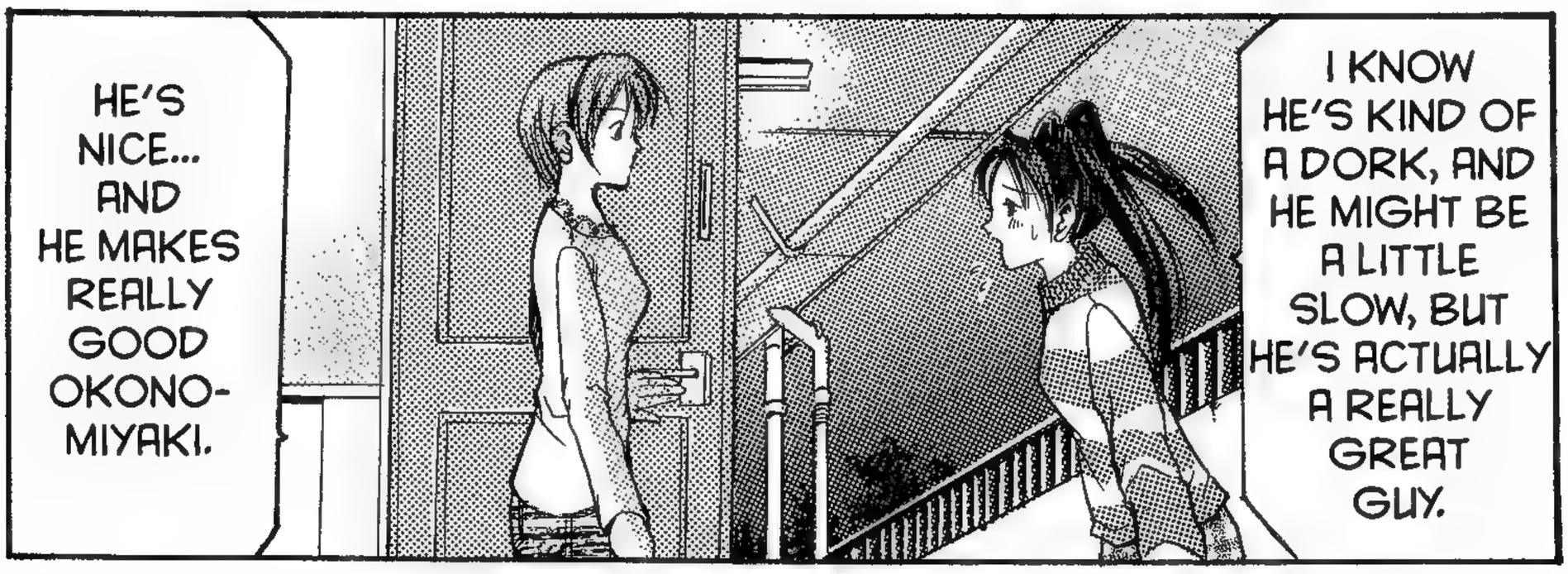
CONTINUED IN BOOK 2

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more an art than a science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction in our translation of the work or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

Okonomiyaki, page 27

Okonomiyaki is a grilled pancake made of flour, eggs, and a combination of meat and vegetables.


HE'S NICE... AND HE MAKES REALLY GOOD OKONO-MIYAKI.
I KNOW HE'S KIND OF A DORK, AND HE MIGHT BE A LITTLE SLOW, BUT HE'S ACTUALLY A REALLY GREAT GUY.

Kanagawa, page 33

Kanagawa is a prefecture in Japan located adjacent to Tokyo. The largest city in Kanagawa is Yokohama.

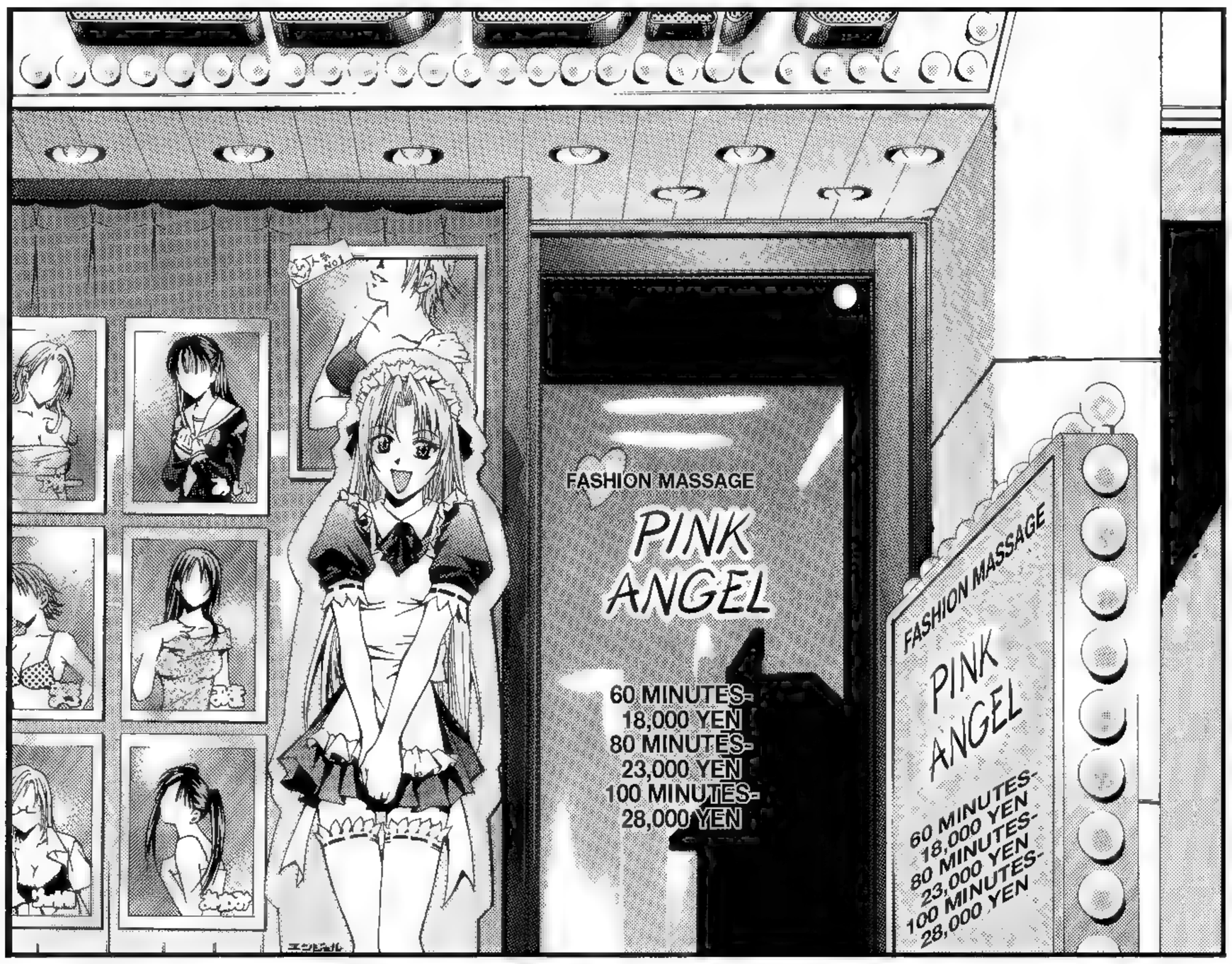
EVERY SINGLE GUY WHO TRIES TO PICK ME UP IS EXACTLY THE SAME.
ZZZZ
THEY TAKE ONE LOOK AT ME AND IT'S ALL ABOUT BOOBS, BOOBS, BOOBS...
PEANUTS

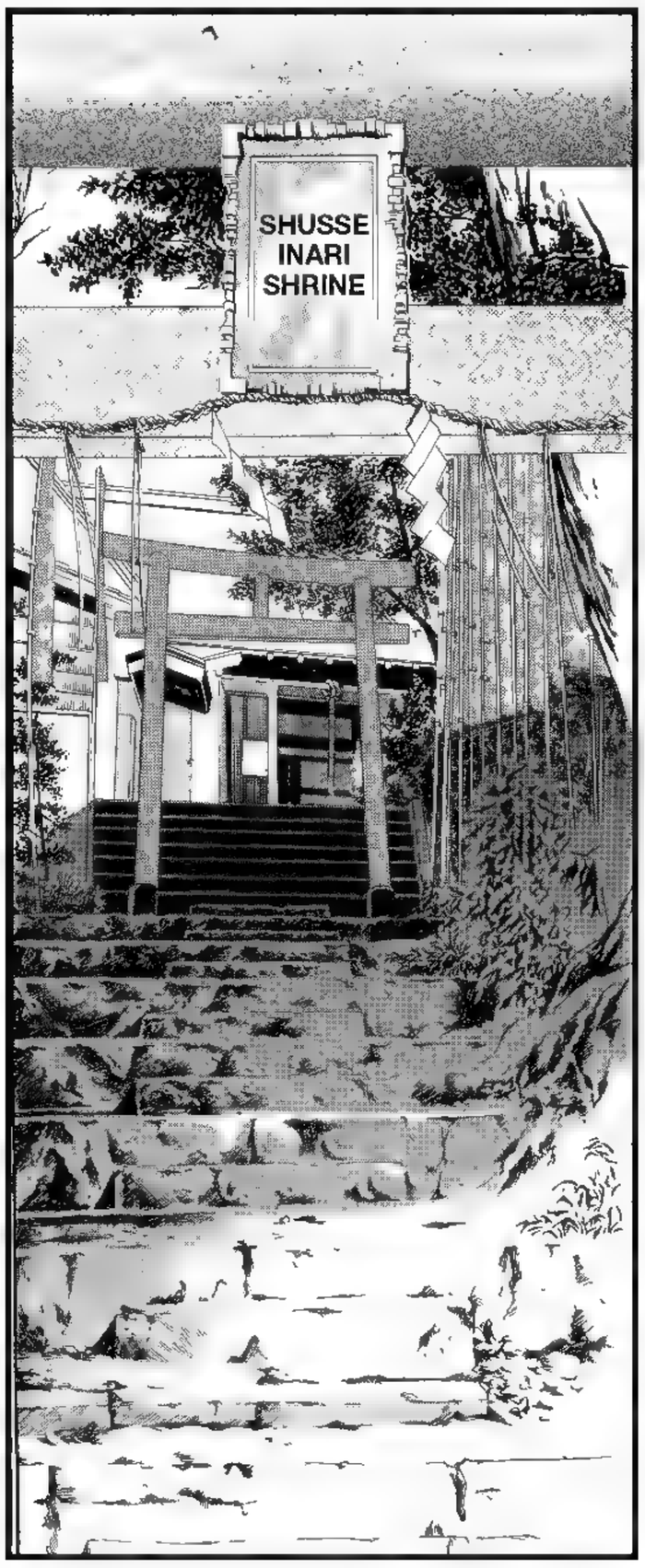
Bag of peanuts, page 34

The bag of peanuts is actually a delicious snack called *kaki-pi,* a combination of peanuts and rice crackers.

Fashion Massage, page 86

"Fashion massage" parlors are an integral part of the Japanese sex industry. Customers choose a girl to perform a massage and...um...other services.



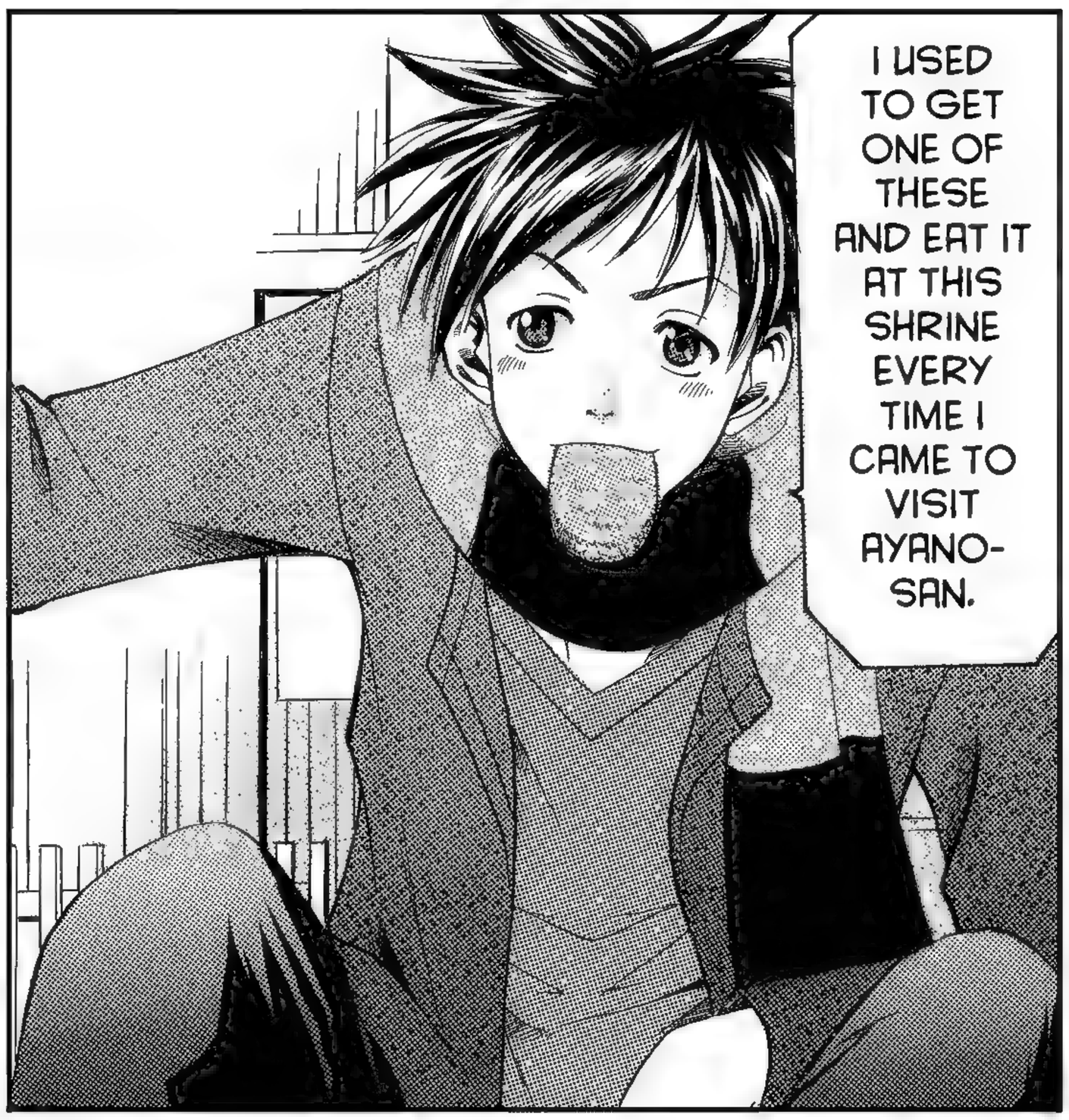


Shinto Shrine, page 92

Shinto shrines are generally located in wooded areas and often provide much needed sanctuary in Japan's concrete jungles.

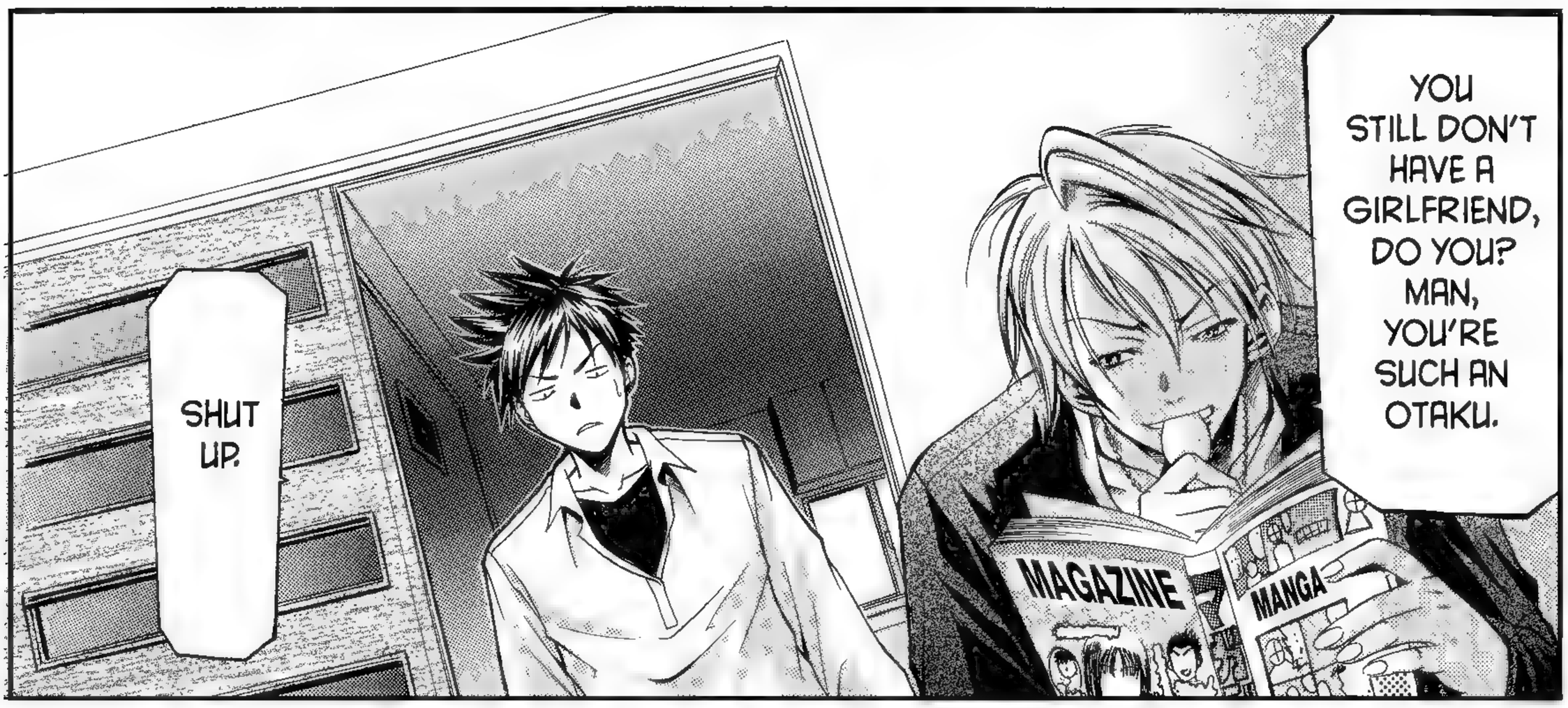
Croquettes, page 95

Croquettes are a popular snack in Japan, usually consisting of meat or veggies that have been coated with bread crumbs and deep-fried.



Otaku, page 119

The term *otaku* is generally used to describe people who are obsessed with comics and anime. To learn more about the world of the Japanese *otaku*, check out *Genshiken*, published by the good folks at Del Rey Manga.



Lucky tea stem, page 125

In Japanese culture, it's said to be good luck to find a tea stem floating in your tea.

Rika-chan, page 143

Rika-chan is the Japanese equivalent of Barbie.

April, page 167

In Japan, the school year starts in April.

Tamagozake, page 181

Tamagozake, made of raw eggs and sake, is a traditional home remedy for colds.

IT'S TAMAGOZAKE. YOU KNOW, EGGS MIXED WITH SAKE. I MADE SOME HARD-BOILED EGGS TOO. I THOUGHT I'D LET YOU TRY SOME.
OF COURSE, YOU'RE PROBABLY NOT HUNGRY SINCE SAKURAI-SAN COOKED ALL THAT—

Preview of Volume 2

We are pleased to present you with a preview of *Suzuka,* Volume 2.

This volume is available in English now.

一緒に入ってく？

う・うん 実は
カサ忘れちゃってさ!!
入れてってくんねー!?
ダメなら別にいい・・・

え!?

いいの!?

・・・うん

別にいいけど・

そ・そっか——
サンキュ——!!

じゃ オレが
カサ持つな!!

・・・うん

ザアアア

ｱﾒ
ｱﾒ
ｱﾒ
ｱﾒ

……

……

か…風(かぜ)……
……強(つよ)いな

春一番(はるいちばん)かな
コレ……

……

ｱﾒ
ｱﾒ
ｱﾒ…

……

そ…それじゃ
明日(あした)から あったかく
なるかもな

……

……

……

……うん

……

……うん

な・・なんかいつもより態度悪(たいどわり)ィぞコイツ・・・・
服部(はっとり)の言(い)うことなんてアテになんねーな

・・・・・

・・・・え？

・・・・大和(やまと)くんてさ・・・・

この前(まえ)の体力測定(たいりょくそくてい)でお前相当(まえそうとう)ポイントアップしてんだよ

足(あし)・・速(はや)いんだね

ま・・まアな!!

ちょっとカッコよかったろ!?

……

コクッ

……うん

……え!?

ドキ

きゃっ…!

ヨロッ

あ…朝比奈(あさひな)!!

!!

あ・・
ゴ・・ゴメン!!
カサが
あ・・・・
ザユッ・・
・・・・・・え
ええ――!?
ザアアアア

Honorifics Explained

Throughout the Del Rey Manga books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many translations into English leave out these important honorifics and therefore distort the "feel" of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Del Rey not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Del Rey Manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san." It is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/
Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

[blank]: Usually forgotten in these lists, but perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as *yobisute,* it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can also be very insulting.

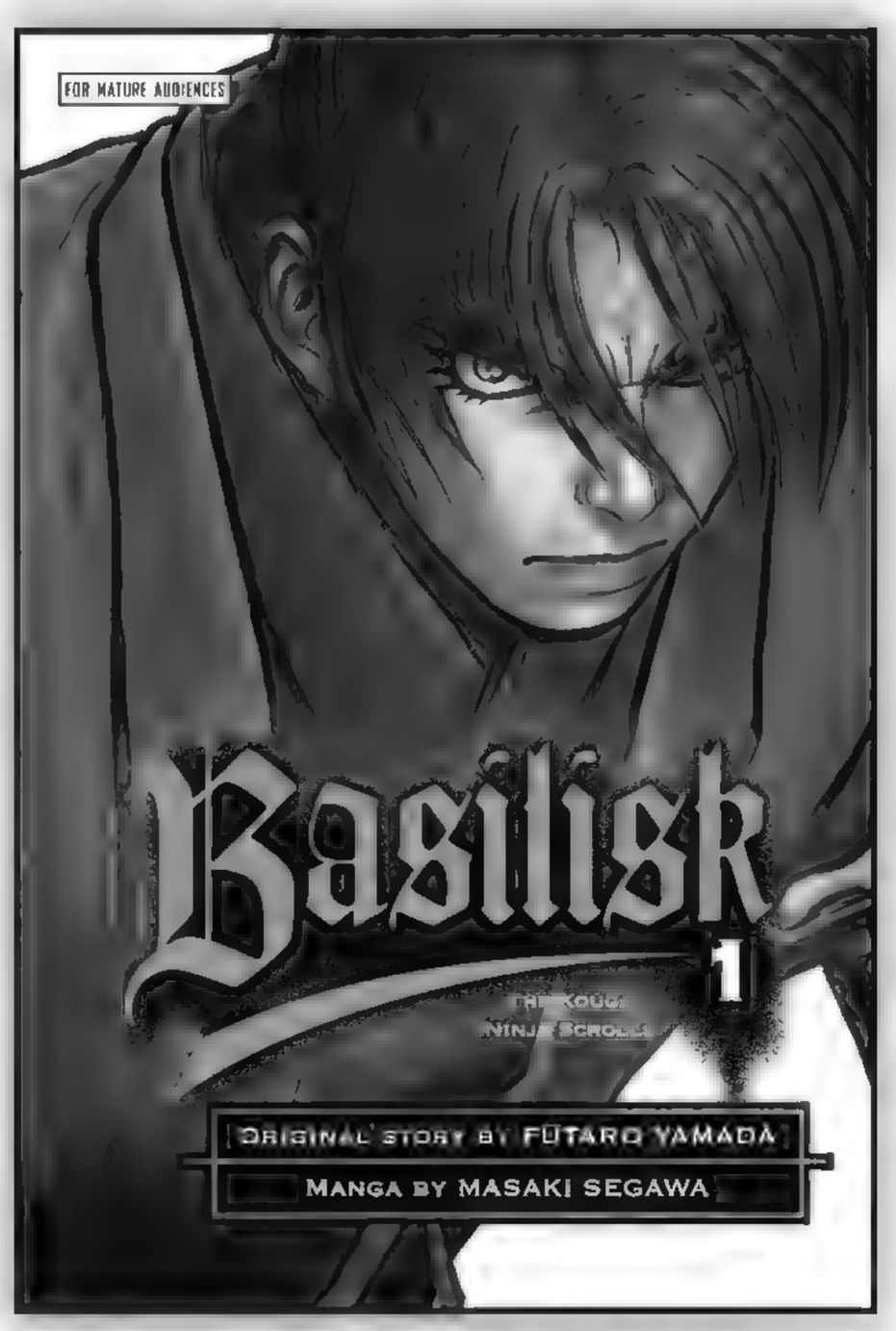
Basilisk

ORIGINAL STORY BY FŪTARO YAMADA
MANGA BY MASAKI SEGAWA

THE BATTLE BEGINS

The Iga clan and the Kouga clan have been sworn enemies for more than four hundred years. Only the Hanzo Hattori truce has kept the two families from all-out war. Now, under the order of Shogun Ieyasu Tokugawa, the truce has been dissolved. Ten ninja from each clan must fight to the death in order to determine who will be the next Tokugawa Shogun. The surviving clan will rule for the next thousand years.

But not all the clan members are in agreement. Oboro of the Iga clan and Gennosuke of the Kouga clan have fallen deeply in love. Now these star-crossed lovers have been pitted against each other. Can their romance conquer a centuries-old rivalry? Or is their love destined to end in death?



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Pastel

by Toshihiko Kobayashi

I LOVE YUU

Poor 16-year-old Mugi Tadano is left heartbroken after his girlfriend moves away. A summer job at his friend Kazuki's beachside snack bar/hotel seems like the perfect way to get his mind off the breakup. Soon Kazuki sets Mugi up on a date with a girl named Yuu, who's supposed to be...well...a little less than perfect. But when Yuu arrives, she's not the monster that either of the boys had imagined. In fact, Yuu is about the cutest girl that Mugi has ever seen. But after Mugi accidentally walks in on Yuu while she's in the bath, Yuu is furious. When Mugi goes to apologize the next day, he learns that Yuu has left the island. Mugi vows to search high and low for her, but will he ever see the beautiful Yuu again?

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AIR GEAR

BY OH!GREAT

Itsuki Minami needs no introduction—everybody's heard of the "Babyface" of the Eastside. He's the strongest kid at Higashi Junior High School, easy on the eyes but dangerously tough when he needs to be. Plus, Itsuki lives with the mysterious and sexy Noyamano sisters. Life's never dull, but it becomes downright dangerous when Itsuki leads his school to victory over vindictive Westside punks with gangster connections. Now he stands to lose his school, his friends, and everything he cares about. But in his darkest hour, the Noyamano girls give him an amazing gift, one that just might help him save his school: a pair of Air Trecks. These high-tech skates are more than just supercool. They'll enable Itsuki to execute the wildest, most aggressive moves ever seen—and introduce him to a thrilling and terrifying new world.

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Gacha Gacha

By Hiroyuki Tamakoshi

Kouhei is your typical Japanese high school student—he's usually late, he loves beef bowls, he pals around with his buddies, and he's got his first-ever crush on his childhood friend Kurara. Before he can express his feelings, however, Kurara heads off to Hawaii with her mother for summer vacation. When she returns, she seems like a totally different person . . . and that's because she is! While she was away, Kurara somehow developed an alternate personality: Arisa! And where Kurara has no time for boys, Arisa isn't interested in much else. Now Kouhei must help protect his friend's secret, and make sure that Arisa doesn't do anything Kurara would regret!

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NEGIMA!™

BY KEN AKAMATSU

Negi Springfield is a ten-year-old wizard teaching English at an all-girls Japanese school. He dreams of becoming a master wizard like his legendary father, the Thousand Master. At first his biggest concern was concealing his magic powers, because if he's ever caught using them publicly, he thinks he'll be turned into an ermine! But in a world that gets stranger every day, it turns out that the strangest people of all are Negi's students! From a librarian with a magic book to a centuries-old vampire, from a robot to a ninja, Negi will risk his own life to protect the girls in his care!

Ages: 16+

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